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NEW DIALOGUES AND PLAYS

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PRIMARY, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED

Adapted from the popular works of well-known authors

BY

BINNEY GUNNISON

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EXPLANATORY PREFACE.

Dramatization of popular novels is the fashion of the day. In this volume are dramatizations of a somewhat different kind. Many novels utterly unsuited to complete dramatization have striking scenes full of dramatic possibilities. A few such scenes are here presented as dialogues. They are for children, for school boys and girls, for "studies" in professional schools of dramatic training, and even for entertainments of the highest class and professional aim.

Too many books of dialogues have been published without any particular reference to actual performance on platform or stage. There are no suggestions of stage business; the characters neither enter nor leave; while the dialogue progresses, no one apparently moves or feels emotion. Nothing is said at the beginning of the dialogue to show the situation of the characters; no hints are given as to the part about to be played. In plays, as ordinarily printed, there is very little to show either character or situation, all must be found out by a thorough study of the play. This may be well for the careful student, but the average amateur has no time, and often only little inclination, to peruse a whole play or a whole novel in order to play a little part in an entertainment.

Perhaps the strongest feature of this book is the carefully prepared introduction to each dialogue. Not only are the

characters all named in order of importance, but the characteristics, the costumes, the relation of one to another, age, size, etc., are all mentioned. Most important of all is what is called the Situation. Here the facts necessary to a clear comprehension of the dialogue following are given very concisely, very briefly, but, it is hoped, adequately for the purpose in hand. The story previous to the opening of the dialogue is related; the condition of the characters at the beginning of the scene is stated; the setting of the platform is carefully described.

The Characters and the Situation before each dialogue will fairly well state what must be known before any adequate production of the dialogue should be undertaken. Yet the editor urges very strenuously that every one who attempts to play a part set down in these dialogues read, with as much care as time will permit, the whole play or novel, from which the dialogue is only an adaptation. The characters will then become a living reality which no brief introduction, however suggestive, could ever hope to create.

Exact descriptions of dress (as on page 80 of the *Primary Dialogues*) need not be literally followed out, provided something of similar nature be substituted. The exact description is given in order to show the picturesque little figure of Dea. Any costume which will make her striking and picturesque will perhaps answer the purpose. The same principle holds in regard to furniture on the platform. In most cases a few general words have sufficed to indicate the kind of room the dialogue occurs in, and the detail is left to the imagination of the manager of the performance. In some cases very exact directions are given. It is best to

follow them out literally. But if for any reason the detail is not followed, the dialogue should be very carefully scanned for any allusions to "properties" left out, and these allusions should be changed.

The directions for acting scattered throughout the dialogues in parentheses are meant only as suggestions. A volume would have to accompany each dialogue, if all the actions of face and of body and the inflections and tones of voice were scrupulously set down. The endeavor should always be to convey the *spirit* of the dialogue. The details can with much more safety be left to the individual actor. The spirit should be carefully criticised by a competent director.

Many dialogues have several scenes in them, and there may not be time to give all the scenes. In that case the earlier scenes may be condensed into a summary and prefixed to the scene given by a short speech, or the summary may be printed on the program.

An evening's entertainment may make use of these dialogues in many ways.

(1) One, two or three dialogues may form the whole entertainment.

(2) There may be music of different kinds appropriate to a single dialogue of some length, and that dialogue may occupy the centre of the evening's entertainment. Good dialogues for such an evening in the advanced part are "Gentlemen, the King!" "Love Conquers Revenge," "Prairie Princesses," "Taming a Wife."

(3) A whole evening may be given to a single book, from which dialogues and recitations are taken with appropriate introduction and connecting summaries. This is

a new and interesting form of educational entertainment. There are more than a dozen of the dialogues of this book which could be used with excellent effect in just such an evening's entertainment. In the advanced part the "Suffering of Nehushta" would be a part of "Zoroaster." It would be in this case wise to have the last scene given in the form of a recitation, for the dramatic form requires the costuming and grouping of many people on the platform at one time. The spectacular effect, however, if the people can be obtained and well drilled, will be much more striking in dramatic form. In Romola, the culmination of the action can be better told than acted. "Tito's Armor" cannot truthfully represent the death of Tito and Baldassarre on the stage. In Ben-Hur the most prominent place on the program will naturally be kept for the Chariot Race, but the dialogue between Ben-Hur and Iras will be almost as interesting. Recitations may lead up to the dialogue "Innocence Rewarded," where the Vicar of Wakefield at last is recompensed for his innocent and unworldly life. The very best use to which "The Bishop's Silver Candlesticks" can be put is to insert it in a program of selections from Victor Hugo's great novel, "Les Misérables," which is one of the best of books for an evening's entertainment.

(4) An evening may be spent with an author like Mark Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson, Alfred Austin, Anthony Hope, Dickens, Tennyson, Longfellow, Shakespeare. Songs may be sung, poems recited and dramatic scenes acted. All of these authors mentioned and many more are represented among the dialogues of this book.

(5) There are many occasions when a dramatic scene,

short or long, but fairly complete in itself, is an excellent feature to enliven a program of music, speeches, business and conversation. For such needs "A Matter of Duty," "Sam Weller and his Father," "Miss Judith Macan," "Open or Shut," "Louis XIV. and his Minister," "The Homeless Old Man" and many others may be suggested.

(6) An evening of poetry ought to include in the program dramatic scenes, and there are poetical dialogues in all of the parts of this book. An interesting study might be a contrast of poetry and prose in dialogue.

A glance at the first page of any dialogue will readily discover the number of actors required and the characters acted. There are dialogues for any number of persons from two to twenty, with speaking parts for from two to about a dozen.

In many of the primary dialogues there are not only parts for little folks but parts for adults. Where adults can not easily be secured (sometimes even when they can be) young people with proper costuming will perform the parts admirably.

The amount of work required to compile this book has been prodigious and has necessarily been spread over a number of years of a very busy life. Although the utmost care has been exercised, inaccuracies and inconsistencies may have crept in. Still there remains the feeling that some service is done the public in sending forth a book of dialogues containing so much of absolutely new material adapted from the best literature, and gathered from the most recent sources.

BINNEY GUNNISON.

Boston, November, 1898.

TRAINING THE RUGGLESES.

Adapted from Mrs. Kate Douglas Wiggin's "Birds' Christmas Carol."

CHARACTERS.

Mrs. Ruggles, *a rather thin hard-working washerwoman.*

Sarah Maud, Peter, Susan, Kitty, Peoria, Cornelius, Clement, Eily, Larry, *her nine children in the order of their ages and sizes.*

Situation.—Mrs. Bird, *in the fine house on the avenue, invites all the Ruggles children to a Christmas dinner.* Mrs. Ruggles *puts all nine through a most thorough process of preparation. They are washed and dressed, and then trained in manners.*

This dialogue is the training which takes place in the kitchen of Mrs. Ruggles. *As there are not chairs for all ten, the smallest ones sit on the wood-box and the coal-hod.*

Mrs. Ruggles *is in her working attire. The children have costumes of all varieties and combinations.* Larry, *the smallest, is continually tugging at a sash which holds his waist and skirt together.*

Mrs. Ruggles *enters, followed by her nine children.*

Mrs. Ruggles.—There! there! now you young ones set down in your places. Eily, you'll have ter set on the wood-

box and Larry on the coal-hod.—There! (*She sits down herself and wipes the perspiration from her face with her apron.*) Well, if I do say so as shouldn't, I never see a cleaner, more stylish mess o' children in my life! I do wish Ruggles could look at ye for a minute! (*Larry pulls at his sash*)—Larry Ruggles, how many times have I got ter tell yer not ter keep pullin' at yer sash? Haven't I told yer if it comes ontied, yer waist 'n' skirt 'll part comp'ny in the middle, 'n' then where 'll yer be? Now, look me in the eye, all of yer! I've of'en told yer what kind of a family the McGrills was. I've got reason to be proud, goodness knows! Your uncle is on the *po*lice force o' New York City; you can take up the paper most any day an' see his name printed out—James McGrill—'n' I can't have my children fetched up common, like some folks'; when they go out they've got to have close, and learn to act decent! Now I want ter see how yer goin' to behave when yer git there to-night. Let's start in at the beginnin' 'n' act out the whole business. Pile into the bedroom there (*she points to the entrance*), every last one of ye, 'n' show me how yer goin' to go int' the parlor. This'll be the parlor, 'n' I'll be Mis' Bird. (*The children all scamper out, and after considerable clatter, come straggling in. Sarah Maud comes first, with a very sheepish look: the small ones giggle and Larry tumbles in head foremost.*) There, I knew yer'd do it in some sech fool way! (*She has sat up with a very haughty expression to represent Mrs. Bird.*) Now go in there and try it over again, every last one o' ye, 'n' if Larry can't come in on two legs he can stay ter home,—d'yer hear? (*They stop giggling and back into the bedroom, and presently issue in lock step, Indian file, with a scared look on every face.*) No, no, no! That's worse yet; yer look for all the world like a gang o' prisoners! There ain't no

style ter that; spread out more, can't yer, 'n' act kind o' careless-like—nobody's goin' ter kill ye! (*They spread out more and take their seats. Mrs. Ruggles speaks impressively.*) Now, yer know there ain't enough decent hats to go round, 'n' if there was I don' know's I'd let yer wear 'em, for the boys would never think to take 'em off when they got inside—but anyhow, there ain't enough good ones. Now, look me in the eye. You needn't wear no hats, none of yer, 'n' when yer get int' the parlor, 'n' they ask yer ter lay off yer hats, Sarah Maud must speak up 'n' say it was sech a pleasant evenin' 'n' sech a short walk that yer left yer hats to home to save trouble. Now, can yer remember?

ALL (*they shout*).—Yes, marm!

MRS. RUGGLES.—What have *you* got ter do with it? Did I tell *you* to say it? Warn't I talkin' ter Sarah Maud?

ALL (*feebly*).—Yes, marm!

MRS. RUGGLES.—Now git up, all of ye, an' try it. (*They all stand.*) Speak up, Sarah Maud. (*She tries in vain to make a sound.*) Quick!

SARAH MAUD (*in agony*).—Ma thought—it was—sech a pleasant hat that we'd—we'd better leave our short walk to home. (*The boys shout and all giggle in spite of themselves.*)

MRS. RUGGLES (*groaning*).—Oh, whatever shall I do with yer? I s'pose I've got to learn it to yer! It was such a pleasant evening.

SARAH MAUD (*gloomily*).—It was sech a pleasant evening.

MRS. RUGGLES.—An' sech a short walk.

SARAH MAUD.—And sech a short walk.

MRS. RUGGLES.—You children sit down and be quiet.—That we left our hats to home to save trouble.

SARAH MAUD.—That we left our hats to home.

MRS. RUGGLES.—*To save trouble.* Mind you put that in. Now say it all.

SARAH MAUD.—It was sech a pleasant evening that we left our hats to home to save trouble.

MRS. RUGGLES.—Oh, dear! Well, that will do. Sit down Sarah Maud. Now, Cornelius, what are *you* goin' ter say ter make yerself good comp'ny?

CORNELIUS (*scared*).—Me? Dunno!

MRS. RUGGLES.—Well, ye ain't goin' to set there like a bump on a log 'thout sayin' a word ter pay for yer vittles, air ye? (*He squirms.*) Ask Mis' Bird how she's feelin' this evenin', or if Mr. Bird's hevin' a busy season, or how this kind o' weather agrees with him, or somethin' like that.—Now, we'll make b'lieve we've got ter the dinner—that won't be so hard, 'cause yer'll have somethin' to do—it's awful bothersome to stan' round an' act stylish.—If they have napkins, Sarah Maud down to Peory (*she points them out*), may put 'em in their laps, 'n' the rest of ye can tuck 'em in yer necks. Don't eat with yer fingers—don't grab no vittles off one 'nother's plates; don't reach for nothin', but wait till yer asked, 'n' if you never *git* asked, don't git up and grab it.—Don't spill nothin' on the tablecloth, or like's not Mis' Bird'll send yer away from the table,—n' I hope she will if yer do!—Susan! keep your handkerchief in your lap where Peory can borry it if she needs it, 'n' I hope she'll know when she does need it, though I don't expect it.—Now, we'll try a few things ter see how they'll go. (*She draws up her mouth and puts on a most supercilious air to imitate the supposed Mrs. Bird.*) Mr. Clement, do you eat cramb'ry sarse?

CLEMENT (*forgetting that he is only rehearsing*).—Bet yer life!

MRS. RUGGLES.—Clement McGrill Ruggles, do you mean to tell me that you'd say that to a dinner-party? I'll give you one more chance. Mr. Clement, will you take some of the cramb'ry?

CLEMENT (*in a subdued tone*).—Yes, marm, thank ye kindly, if you happen ter have any handy.

MRS. RUGGLES.—Very good indeed! But they won't give yer two tries to-night,—yer jest remember that!—Miss Peory, do you speak for white or dark meat?

PEORIA (*shyly*).—I ain't perticler as ter color,—anything that nobody else wants will suit me.

MRS. RUGGLES.—First-rate! Nobody could speak more genteel than that.—Miss Kitty, will you have hard or soft sarse with your pudden'?

KITTY (*with an easy, graceful bow*).—Hard or soft? Oh! A little of both, if you please, an' I'm much obliged. (*They all point at Kitty in scorn, and Peter grunts very audibly.*)

MRS. RUGGLES.—You just stop your gruntin', Peter Ruggles; that warn't greedy, that was all right. I wish I could git it inter your heads that it ain't so much what yer say, as the way you say it. Eily, you an' Larry's too little to train, so you just look at the rest, an' do's they do, 'n' the Lord have mercy on ye 'n' help ye to act decent! Now, is there anything more ye'd like to practice?

PETER (*gloomily*).—If yer tell me one more thing, I can't set up an' eat; I'm so cram full o' manners now, I'm ready ter bust, 'thout no dinner at all.

CORNELIUS.—Me too!

MRS. RUGGLES (*sarcastically*).—Well, I'm sorry for ye both; if the 'mount o' manners yer've got on hand now troubles ye, you're dreadful easy hurt! Now, Sarah Maud, after dinner, about once in so often, you must git up 'n' say, "I guess we'd better be goin';" 'n' if they say, "Oh no, set a while longer," yer can set; but if they don't say nothin' you've got ter get up 'n' go. Now, hev yer got that int' yer head?

SARAH MAUD (*repeating in terror*).—"About once in so often." (*Mournfully*). Well, seems as if this whole dinner-party set right square on top 'o me! Mebbe I could manage my own manners, but ter manage nine mannerses is worse'n staying to home!

MRS RUGGLES (*with good nature*).—I guess you'll get along. I wouldn't mind if folks would only say, "Oh, childern will be childern;" but they won't. They'll say, "Land o' Goodness, who fetched them childern up?"—It's quarter past five, 'n' yer can go now. (*They all start along.*) Remember 'bout the hats—don't all talk ter once—Susan, lend yer han'k'chief ter Peory,—Peter, don't keep screwin' yer scarf-pin,—Cornelius, hold yer head up straight,—Sarah Maud, don't take yer eyes off o' Larry, 'n' Larry you keep holt o' Sarah Maud 'n' do jest as she says (*as they finally disappear she follows and says*), 'n' whatever you do, all of yer, never forgit for one second that yer mother was a McGrill. (*She goes out.*)

PATSY'S VISIT.

Adapted from "Patsy," by Mrs. Kate Douglas Wiggin.

CHARACTERS.

Miss Kate, *a pleasant-faced young lady, neatly dressed.*

Patsy Dennis, *a small boy, with shrunken, deformed body, large eyes, and a big head of hair.*

Situation.—Miss Kate *conducts a kindergarten in the neglected part of a great city. In the afternoon, after the school has been dismissed, she is sitting by her table, wearily thinking over the events of the day, when she falls asleep. She is awakened by the entrance of little* Patsy, *who wants to join the school. The following is the conversation which takes place.*

Patsy *has tried to wash his face, but has left the center of it untouched and grimy. His jacket is ragged and torn away; one leg of his trousers is slit up the side and flaps as he walks; the crown of his hat is gone, and a bruised orange bulges out of his pocket.*

The conversation takes place in a pleasant room, with plants and flowers in it. On the walls hang pictures of a dog, of a bear, and of some chickens. There are several chairs for little folks in the room, and there is a table on which stands a globe of gold-fish. A bird-cage swings from the ceiling, with a canary in it.

MISS KATE *enters and sits by table.*

MISS KATE.—I suppose most people would call this a hard and monotonous life. There is an eternal regularity in the succession of amusing and heart-breaking incidents, but it is not monotonous, for I am too close to all the problems that bother this workaday world,—so close that they touch me on every side. No missionary can come so near to these people. I am so close that I can feel the daily throb of their need and they can feel the throb of my sympathy. But my brain gets tired—so tired,—so tired. (*She nods and falls asleep in her chair.*)

PATSY *enters and takes a seat on the other side of the table.*

PATSY.—Ahem! Ahem!

MISS KATE (*starting quickly and sitting up very straight, and then discovering Patsy*).—Well, sir, did you come to see me?

PATSY.—Yes, I did.

MISS KATE.—Let me think; I don't seem to remember; I am so sleepy. Are you one of my little friends?

PATSY.—No, I hain't yit, but I'm goin' to be.

MISS KATE.—That's good, and we'll begin right now, shall we?

PATSY.—I knowed yer fur Miss Kate the minute I seen yer.

MISS KATE.—How was that?

PATSY.—The boys said as how you was a kind o' pretty lady, with towsly hair in front.

MISS KATE (*she turns away an instant with a look of horror*).—I'm very much obliged to the boys.

PATSY.—Kin yer take me in?

MISS KATE.—What? Here? Into the Kindergarten?

PATSY.—Yes; I bin waitin' this yer long whiles fur to get in.

MISS KATE (*looking at him doubtfully*).—Why, my dear little boy, you're too—big, aren't you? We have only tiny little people here, you know; not six years old. You are more, aren't you?

PATSY.—Well, I'm nine by the book; but I ain't more'n scerce six along o' losing them three year.

MISS KATE.—What do you mean, child? How could you *lose* three years?

PATSY.—I lost 'em on the back stairs, don't yer know. My father he got fightin' mad when he was drunk, and pitched me down two flights of 'em, and my back was most clean broke in two, so I couldn't git out o' bed forever, till just now.

MISS KATE.—Why, poor child, who took care of you?

PATSY.—Mother, she minded me when she warn't out washin'.

MISS KATE.—And did she send you here to-day?

PATSY.—Well! however could she, bein' as how she's dead? I s'posed you knowed that. She died after I got well; she only waited for me to git up, anyhow.

MISS KATE (*sympathetically*).—What's your name, dear boy?

PATSY.—Patsy.

MISS KATE.—Patsy what?

PATSY.—Patsy nothin'! just only Patsy; that's all of it. The boys call me "Humpty Dumpty" and "Rags," but that's sassy.

MISS KATE.—But all little boys have another name, Patsy.

PATSY.—Oh, I got another, if yer so dead set on it,—it's Dinnis,—but Jim says 't won't wash; 'tain't no 'count, and I wouldn't tell yer nothin' but a sure-pop name, and that's Patsy. Jim says lots of other fellers out to the 'sylum has Dinnis fur names, and they ain't worth shucks, nuther. Dinnis he must have had orful much boys, I guess.

MISS KATE.—Who is Jim?

PATSY.—Him and I's brothers, kind o' brothers, not sure 'nuff brothers. Oh, I dunno how it is 'zactly,—Jim 'll tell yer. He dunno *as* I be, yer know, 'n' he dunno *but* I be, 'n' he's afeard to leave go o' me for *fear* I be. See?

MISS KATE.—Do you and Jim live together?

PATSY.—Yes, we live at Mis' Kennett's. Jim swipes the grub; I build the fires 'n' help cook 'n' wipe dishes for Jim when I ain't sick, 'n' I mind Mis' Kennett's babies right along,—she most allers has new ones, 'n' she gives me my lunch for doin' it.

MISS KATE.—Is Mrs. Kennett nice and kind?

PATSY.—O—h, yes; she's orful busy, yer know, 'n' won't stand no foolin'.

MISS KATE.—Is there a Mr. Kennett?

PATSY.—Sometimes there is, 'n' most allers there ain't. (*She looks puzzled.*) He's allers out 'o work, yer know, 'n he don't sleep ter home, 'n' if yer want him yer have to hunt him up. He's real busy now, though,—doin' fine.

MISS KATE.—That's good. What does he do?

PATSY.—He marches with the workingmen's percessions 'n' holds banners.

MISS KATE.—I see.—And you haven't any father, poor little man?

PATSY.—Ye bet yer life I don't want no more father in mine. He knocked me down them stairs, and then he went off in a ship, and I don't go a cent on fathers!—Say, is this a 'zamination?

MISS KATE (*a little startled*).—Yes, it's a sort of one, Patsy, —all the kind we have.

PATSY.—And do I have to bring any red tape?

MISS KATE.—What do you mean?

PATSY.—Why, Jim said he bet 't would take an orful lot 'o

red tape t' git me in. (*He works away at his pocket and finally pulls out a battered orange.*) Here's an orange I brung yer! It's been skwuz some, but there's more in it.

MISS KATE (*with a forced expression of gratitude*).—Thank you, Patsy.—Now, let us see! You want to come to the Kindergarten, do you, and learn to be a happy little working-boy? But oh, Patsy, I'm like the old woman in the shoe, I have so many children I don't know what to do.

PATSY.—Yes, I know. Jim knows a boy what went here wunst. He said yer never licked the boys; and he said, when the "nifty" little girls come to git in, with their white aprons, yer said there warn't no room; but when the dirty chaps with tored close come, yer said yer'd *make* room. Jim said as how yer'd never show *me* the door, sure.—P'raps I can't come every day, yer know, 'cos I might have fits.

MISS KATE.—Fits! Good gracious, child! What makes you think that?

PATSY (*composedly*).—Oh, I has 'em. I kicks the footboard clean off when I has 'em bad, all along o' my losin' them three year!—You've got things fixed up mighty handy here, haven't yer? Fishes—'nd c'nary birds—'nd flowers—'nd pictures—is there stories to any of 'em?

MISS KATE.—Stories to every single one, Patsy! We've just turned that corner by the little girl feeding chickens, and to-morrow we shall begin on that splendid dog by the window.

PATSY (*very excited*).—Jiminy! I'm glad I got in in time for that!—'nd ain't that a bear by the door thar?

MISS KATE.—Yes; that's a mother bear with cubs.

PATSY.—Has he got a story, too?

MISS KATE.—Everything has a story in this room.

PATSY.—Jiminy! 'ts lucky I didn't miss that one! There's

a splendid bear in a s'loon on Fourth Street,—mebbe the man would leave him go a spell if you told him what a nice place you hed up here. Say, them fishes keep it up lively, don't they?—S'pose they're playin' tag?

MISS KATE (*smiling*).—I shouldn't wonder, it looks like it. Now, Patsy (*she rises*), I must be going home, but you shall come to-morrow at nine o'clock, surely, remember! and the children will be so glad to have another little friend. You'll dress yourself nice and clean, won't you!

PATSY (*gets out of chair*).—Well, I should smile! but these is the best I got. I got another part to this hat, though (*he holds it up*), and another pocket belongs with these britches.—Ain't I clean? I cleaned myself by the feelin'!

MISS KATE (*handing him a hand-mirror from the table*). —Here's a glass, dear; how do you think you succeeded?

PATSY (*in astonishment*).—Jiminy! I didn't get much of a sweep on that, did I, now? But don't you fret, I've got the lay of it now, and I'll just polish her off red-hot to-morrer, 'n' don't you forgit it!

MISS KATE.—Patsy, come into this other room and I'll give you a warm bun and a glass of milk; let's eat and drink together, because this is the beginning of our friendship; but please don't talk street words to Miss Kate; she doesn't like them. I'll do everything I can to make you have a good time, and you'll try to do a few things to please me, won't you? (*Patsy looks embarrassed, twirls his hat-brim and follows her out.*)

AUNT ELLEN'S HATCHET.

CHARACTERS.

Aunt Ellen, *a young lady, gentle and attractive to children.*

Gladys, *a very small girl.*

Alice, **Ida**, *two other girls not quite so small.*

Harry, *a small boy.*

Situation.—AUNT ELLEN *is entreated by the children for a story. She tells one which stirs up the consciences of them all so that at the end of the story they confess to several ludicrous sins.*

They all sit in a curve about AUNT ELLEN, *who has an arm-chair in the center of the platform. The best order is* HARRY, GLADYS, AUNT ELLEN, ALICE, IDA. *Let the children show all the interest they feel at the story* AUNT ELLEN *tells. The interest of the audience depends on the interest the children feel and show.*

Enter AUNT ELLEN *and* HARRY, IDA, ALICE *and* GLADYS, *with some confusion.*

ALICE.—You will tell us a story, won't you, auntie?

AUNT ELLEN (*scanning their faces*).—You really want a story, do you?

ALL.—Oh, yes, yes!

AUNT ELLEN.—Well, come sit down and be quiet, then. (*They take seats, with Gladys next to Aunt Ellen.*)

ALICE (*after they are seated*).—A fairy story, you know.

AUNT ELLEN.—A fairy story? I don't know about that. I told a little boy a fairy story once, and he went right off and whispered to his mother that I was a very wicked lady, for the story wasn't true, not a bit.

HARRY.—Poh! he was a smart boy.

AUNT ELLEN.—I don't like to be called a wicked lady, you know.

ALICE.—There now, auntie, don't you s'pose we know they're only play-stories? Just as if we hadn't a speck of sense!

AUNT ELLEN (*covering her eyes with her fingers*).—Well, let me see. Once upon a time, when the moon was full—

GLADYS.—Full of what? (*She looks straight up into Aunt Ellen's face.*) Full of fairies?

AUNT ELLEN (*stroking Gladys's hair*).—When the moon was round, my child. But wait. I'll tell a story Gladys can understand—wouldn't you, my dears? When I was a little girl—

ALL.—That's right. Oh, tell about that. (*They settle themselves to listen.*)

GLADYS.—Was you about as big as me? And was your name *little Ellen?*

AUNT ELLEN.—Yes, they called me little Ellen sometimes, and sometimes Nellie. When I was about as old as Alice, I happened to go into the back-room one day, and saw Uncle William's hatchet lying on the meat-block. I knew I had no right to touch it, but it came into my head that I would try to break open some clams. The hatchet, instead of cracking the shells, came down with full force on my foot! (*The children start.*) I had on thick boots, but it cut through my right boot deep into the bone. Oh, how I screamed!

ALICE (*looking scared*).—I should think you would, auntie. Did it bring the blood?

AUNT ELLEN.—Yes, indeed! Why, when I went into the kitchen, my footsteps were tracked with little pools of blood, oozing out of my boot. Sister Maria screamed out, "Oh, look at Nellie! She's cut her foot with that hatchet." "No, no, I haven't," I said, for I was afraid of being punished. You see, father had forbidden us little ones ever to touch that hatchet.

ALICE (*looking shocked*).—Why, you told a right up and down—fib.

HARRY (*shaking his head*).—A real whopper.

AUNT ELLEN.—So I did, children, and before my story is done, you shall see what misery my sin caused me.

GLADYS.—Did Mr. 'Gustus Allen know about it?

AUNT ELLEN (*looking very self-conscious and blushing*).—I guess not. He lived ever so far off then.

GLADYS.—Oh, dear. I wish he hadn't gone to the wars. How it made you cry!

ALICE.—Hush up, please, can't you, Gladys? Aunt Ellen is telling a story.

AUNT ELLEN.—Well, they sent for the doctor in great haste, and then tried to pull off my boot; but my foot was so badly swollen and bleeding so fast, that it took a great while. I can't tell how long, for I fainted. It was ever so long before I could walk a step. Every time anybody spoke of my hurt, I said, "Why, I was just coming into the house with those clams, and my foot slipped and I fell and hit me on something. I don't know whether it was a hatchet or a stick of wood; but I never touched the hatchet!"

IDA.—There, I shouldn't have thought that of *you*, auntie.

HARRY.—Poh! they must have known you was a-foolin'; of course they did.

AUNT ELLEN.—Well, I knew nobody believed me. The hatchet had been found red with blood, and mother looked,

O, so sad! but I had told that falsehood so many times that it did seem as if I hadn't any courage left to tell the truth. It had grown to be very easy to keep saying, "I never *touched* the hatchet."

ALICE (*whispering to Ida*).—Makes me think of that play. "My father's lost his hatchet."

AUNT ELLEN.—Every one tried to amuse me while I was sick, but there was always a thorn in my pillow.

GLADYS.—A thorn?

AUNT ELLEN.—Not a real thorn, dear. I mean I had told a wrong story, and I couldn't feel happy. (*Here Alice turns away her head and looks far away*). I got well, only I limped a little. Then it was almost time to think of making presents for the Christmas tree. I didn't like to have Christmas come while I was feeling so. I talked it over with myself a great while though, and at last I said, "I *will;* I'll do it." First, I asked God to forgive me and help me. Then I went into the parlor where your grandfather was—he wasn't deaf then. I thought I should choke. I caught hold of one of the buttons on his coat, and spoke as fast as I could. "O father, I've told more than a hundred thousand lies. I *did* take that hatchet! Will you forgive me?

ALICE.—Did he?

AUNT ELLEN.—Forgive! I guess he did! My dear child, it was just what he had been waiting to do. Oh, and the way he talked to me about lying, I shall never, never forget if I live to be a hundred years old.—I believe that's about all the story there is to it, children.

IDA.—Well, I'm much obliged to you, auntie; I think it's just as nice as a fairy story—don't you, Alice?

ALICE (*looking confused*).—I don't know, I'm sure.—See here, auntie, I've lost your gold ring!

AUNT ELLEN.—My ring? I forgot that I let you take it.

ALICE.—Don't you know I asked you for it when you stood by the table making bread? And it slipped off my finger this afternoon into the water barrel!

AUNT ELLEN.—Why, Alice!

ALICE.—And I was a coward, and didn't dare to tell you, auntie. Sometime when you asked for it, I was going to say, "Hadn't you better take a pair of tongs and see if it isn't in the water-barrel?

AUNT ELLEN.—Oh, Alice!

IDA.—She isn't any worse than me, auntie. Ma asked me how the mud came on my handkerchief, and I said Gladys wiped my boots with it. And so she did, auntie, but I told her to. And wasn't I such a coward for laying it off on little Gladys?

AUNT ELLEN. I am glad you have told me the whole truth now, though it does make me feel sad, too, for it's too much like my hatchet story. Oh, do remember from this time, children, and never, never *dare* be *cowards* again. (*She rises.*) Come children, it's time for pleasant dreams now, and kisses all round. (*They go out.*)

THE NEW BABY.

CHARACTERS.

Small Person, *a little girl of seven.*

Annie, *another little girl, her Best Friend.*

A Nurse, *with a tiny baby or large doll.*

Situation.—*Two little girls are walking abroad toward dusk, when they see a woman approaching with a baby in her arms. They are all eagerness to see. Then follows this dialogue.*

Enter SMALL PERSON *and* ANNIE.

SMALL PERSON.—There is a lady with a baby, and it looks like a new one.

ANNIE.—It is a new one. She isn't a Square lady, I wonder who she is.

SMALL PERSON (*almost in a whisper*).—Would she think it rude if we spoke to her?

ANNIE.—Oh, we don't know her. She might think it very rude.

SMALL PERSON.—Do you think she would? She looks kind.

ANNIE.—Let us walk past her.

Enter NURSE, *with baby in her arms; the children pass by, looking up into her face, and she smiles at them.*

ANNIE (*nudging the other*).—Let's ask her. You do it.

SMALL PERSON.—No, you.

ANNIE.—I daren't.

SMALL PERSON.—I daren't, either.

ANNIE.—Oh, *do*. It's a perfectly new one.

SMALL PERSON.—Oh, *you* do it. See how nice she looks. (*The Nurse has turned back and they all meet again.*) If you please, isn't that a new baby?

NURSE.—Yes, do you want to look at it?

BOTH.—Oh, yes, please. We do love them so.

NURSE (*she stoops down, turns the white lace veil back and shows the face*).—There.

SMALL PERSON.—Oh, isn't it a *beautiful* one!

ANNIE.—Is it a *very* new one?

NURSE.—Yes, very new.

SMALL PERSON.—*How* new?

NURSE.—Only a month. Are you so very fond of babies?

ANNIE.—We love them better than anything in the world.

NURSE.—Better than dolls?

SMALL PERSON.—Oh, thousands better!

NURSE.—But dolls don't cry.

SMALL PERSON.—If I had a baby, it wouldn't cry, because I should take such care of it.

NURSE.—Would you like a baby of your own?

SMALL PERSON.—I would give worlds and worlds for one!

NURSE.—Would you like me to give you this one?

SMALL PERSON (*breathlessly*).—*Give* it to me? Oh, you couldn't.

NURSE.—I think I could if you would be sure to take care of it.

SMALL PERSON.—Oh, oh! but its mamma wouldn't let you.

NURSE (*reflectively*).—Yes, I think she would. You see, she has enough of them.

SMALL PERSON (*gasping with incredulity*). — Ah! you —you're making fun of me.

NURSE.—No, I am not at all. They are very tiresome when there are a great many of them. What would you do with this one if I gave it to you?

SMALL PERSON (*eagerly*).—I would wash it every morning. I would wash it in a little bath, and with a big soft sponge and Windsor soap—and I would puff it all over with powder —and dress it and undress it—and put it to sleep, and walk it about the room—and trot it on my knees—and give it milk.

NURSE (*seriously*).—It takes a great deal of milk.

SMALL PERSON.—I would ask Mamma to let me take it from the milkman. I'm sure she would, I would give it as much as it wanted, and it would sleep with me, and I would buy it a rattle, and—

NURSE.—I see you know how to take care of it. You shall have it.

SMALL PERSON (*fearfully*).—But how can its mamma *spare* it? Are you sure she could spare it?

NURSE.—Oh, yes, she can spare it. Of course I must take it back to her to-night and tell her you want it, and I have promised it to you; but to-morrow evening you can have it.

SMALL PERSON.—Oh, really, can I?

NURSE.—Yes. Goodby. (*She goes out.*)

SMALL PERSON.—Goodby. Oh, Annie, won't we have a nice time with a new baby? Come home and tell Mamma all about it. (*They go out.*)

THE UNBURIED WOMAN.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Bright, *a cheerful old gentleman.*

Mrs. Pokabout, Mrs. Talket, Mrs. Goround, *three old ladies, full of curiosity, and dressed in old-fashioned costumes.*

Situation.—MRS. POKABOUT *and* MRS. TALKET *are hunting for news when they meet* MR. BRIGHT. *He tells them about a woman who is denied burial, and then he hurries away. After a while he returns to clear up the mystery and laugh at the gossipers.*

Little folks should dress up and play these old folks. The old women are looking about all the time to find something wrong. The scene is on a street-corner and so very little is needed to decorate the platform.

MRS. POKABOUT *and* MRS. TALKET *enter from one side.* MR. BRIGHT *enters from the other side. They meet.*

MRS. POKABOUT.—Have you heard any news, Mrs Talket?

MRS. TALKET.—News? no, I am dying to hear some. I haven't heard a word since last night, and here it is noon.

MR. BRIGHT.—I heard something as I came along, and you wouldn't believe it, though I received it from a person who tells the truth and knew the fact, and so he couldn't make a mistake.

MRS. TALKET.—Oh, tell it to us. I hope it is somebody run away.

MRS. POKABOUT.—I hope it is a murder or a suicide. We haven't had any good news these two months.

MR. BRIGHT.—It is neither one. There is a woman down in the village and they will not let her be buried.

MRS. TALKET.—You don't say so!

MR. BRIGHT.—I do. They positively refuse to bury her.

MRS. POKABOUT.—Do tell! What could the poor creature have done to be denied burial?

MR. BRIGHT.—I do not know what the trouble was, but they say the coroner has his reasons, and buried she shall not be.

MRS. POKABOUT.—Where is she lying? I must go and inquire into it. Bless me, Mrs. Talket, how could this happen and we not hear of it?

MRS. TALKET.—Did you hear her name, Mr. Bright? that may give us a clue.

MR. BRIGHT.—I did not learn her name, though, if I forget not, it began with a G, —— or some such letter. But I have a little errand up the street, and must leave you. In the meantime, as we know so little, it will be wise not to repeat what I have told you. Good morning. (*He goes out.*)

MRS. POKABOUT.—Did you ever hear of anything so strange? One of two things is certain, she has either killed herself or been killed, and is kept for examination.

MRS. TALKET.—I don't understand it so. Mr. Bright seemed to say that she had been lying a long time, and was not to be buried at all. But here comes Mrs. Goround, and perhaps she can tell us all about it, as she comes fresh from the village.

MRS. GOROUND *enters.*

MRS. POKABOUT.—Good-morning, Mrs. Goround.

MRS. GOROUND.—Good-morning, Mrs. Pokabout. How do you do, Mrs. Talket?

MRS. TALKET.—Pretty well, I thank you. How do you do?

MRS. GOROUND.—Not very well, I'm much obliged to you. I've had a touch of hydrophoby, I believe they call it, or something else.

MRS. POKABOUT. (*to Mrs. Talket*).—Nothing new. She always hated cold water. (*Aloud.*) How did the dreadful disease affect you, Mrs. Goround! What dog bit you?

MRS. GOROUND.—Dog! What do you mean by a dog? The disease began with a cold in my head, and a sore throat and—

MRS. TALKET.—Oh, it was the influenza.

MRS. GOROUND.—So it was. I knew it was some outlandish name, and they all sound alike to me. I wish there *was* no foreign words.

MRS. POKABOUT.—Mrs. Goround, did you hear the dreadful news in the village?

MRS. GOROUND.—No. What dreadful news? I have not heard *nothing*, good or bad.

MRS. POKABOUT.—What! haven't you heard of the woman in the village that they won't bury?

MRS. GOROUND.—Not a word. Who is she? What's her name?

MRS. TALKET.—Her name begins with G., and as that begins your name, I hoped you would know something about it.

MRS. GOROUND.—Bless me! I never heard a syllable of it! Why don't they bury the poor thing? I couldn't refuse to bury even a dog.

MRS. POKABOUT.—There is a suspicion of murder or suicide in the case.

MRS. GOROUND.—Well, they hang murderers and suicides, don't they? What can be the matter? There is something very strange about it.

MRS. TALKET.—I am dying to know all about it. Come, let's all go down to the village, and find out. I love to get hold of a mystery.

MRS. POKABOUT.—I say, let us all go, and here is Mr. Bright coming back. He will go with us, for he told us the news and he is dying to learn the particulars.

MR. BRIGHT *comes in again.*

MR. BRIGHT.—Good morning again, ladies.

ALL.—Good morning.

MRS. GOROUND.—What was the matter with that-*air* woman that they won't bury in the village.

MR. BRIGHT.—Nothing is the matter with her.

MRS. GOROUND.—Then in *marcy's* name, why don't they bury her?

MR. BRIGHT.—I know only one reason, but that is a very good one.

MRS. POKABOUT.—We did not know you knew the reason they wouldn't bury her. Why didn't you tell us what it was?

MR. BRIGHT.—You did not ask me, and besides it is somewhat of a secret.

MRS. TALKET.—You need not fear our speaking of it. Hurry and tell us.

MRS. POKABOUT.—Yes, yes. I am bursting with curiosity.

MRS. GOROUND.—And I too, Mr. Bright; you say there is but one reason why they do not bury the woman, and now what is that? (*He looks about with a smile.*)

MRS. POKABOUT.—What is it?

MRS. TALKET.—Yes, what is it?

ALL (*earnestly*).—What is it?

MR. BRIGHT. (*going out*).—She is not dead!

ALL (*rushing after him*).—You horrid——(*They go out.*)

PLAYING "HOOKEY."

CHARACTERS.

Horace, *a small boy, with two fishing poles.*

Prudy, *a smaller girl, with a tin dipper.*

A Voice within.

Situation.—PRUDY *has gone out to pick currants. She suddenly sees her cousin* HORACE, *who has come from the West to spend a year. He is on the other side of the bushes and he persuades her to go down to the river to fish. Afterward his conscience troubles him for playing truant;* PRUDY *gets no bites. Just then her aunt's voice calls and they hurry away home.*

A row of currant bushes extend down one side of the platform with only one small opening. Various devices may be used to secure this effect, a row of plants, a set of real currant bushes, even a fence. The river is supposed to run along in front of the platform which forms the bank of the stream. There should be some means of propping up PRUDY'S *pole for her, and some rock for her to sit on.*

Enter PRUDY, *with a tin dipper to pick currants in, and* HORACE *with fishing-rods, on opposite sides of the platform and of the row of currant bushes.*

PRUDY.—I thought you was to school!

HORACE (*pulling his hat over his eyes with shame*).—Well, I ain't. The teacher don't keep no order, and I won't go to such a school, so there!

PRUDY.—They don't want *me* to go, 'cause I should know too much. I can say all my letters now, right down straight, 'thout looking on, either.

HORACE.—Oh, ho! you can't say 'em skipping about, and I shouldn't care if I was you. But you ought to know how to fish, Miss. Don't you wish you could drop in your line, and catch 'em the way I do?

PRUDY (*dropping her dipper and looking through plants*).—Do they like to have you catch 'em; don't it hurt?

HORACE.—Hurt? Not as I know of. They needn't bite if they don't want to.

PRUDY (*looking wise*).—No, I s'pose they want to get out, and that's why they bite. Of course, when fishes stay in the water much it makes 'em drown.

HORACE (*laughing*).—Oh, my stars! you ought to live "out west," you're such a cunning little spud. Come, now, here's another fish-pole for you. I'll show you how to catch one, and I'll bet 't will be a polywog—you're just big enough.

PRUDY.—But grandma didn't say I might go down to the river. Wait till I go ask her. (*She starts back.*)

HORACE.—Poh! no, you needn't; I have to hurry. Grandma *always* likes it when you go with me, Prudy, because you see I'm a boy, and she knows I can take care of you twice as well as Grace and Susy can.

PRUDY (*clapping her hands*).—Oh, they won't any of 'em know I can fish, and how they'll laugh. How'll I get over there?

HORACE.—Give us your bonnet, and then you "scooch" down, and I'll pull you through. (*She lies down flat on*

the floor and stretches out her hands. He grabs them and pulls her through between two bushes.) There, now, I've been and put a bait on the end of your hook, and I plump it in the water—so (*he throws the line over the edge of the platform*). You just hold on to the pole.

PRUDY.—But it jiggles—it tips me. (*She falls down.*)

HORACE.—Well, that's smart! (*He picks her up.*) There you sit down next time, and I'll prop up the pole with a rock—this way. (*He props up the pole with two rocks.*) There, now, you hold it a little easy, and when you feel a nibble you let me know.

PRUDY (*shaking the line*).—What's a nibble?

HORACE.—A nibble? Why, it's a bite. (*They sit very quiet for some time.*)

PRUDY.—Now, now! I've got a nibble! (*Horace springs up to catch her line*). I feel it right here on my neck; I s'pose it's a fly.

HORACE. (*going back to his own line*).—Now look here, you're a little too bad. You made me drop my line just when I was going to have a nibble. Wait till you feel the string wiggle, and then speak, but don't scream. (*They sit still a while longer.*)

PRUDY (*with a groan*).—Oh, dear! I never did see such fishes. I guess they don't want to be catched.

HORACE.—There, now you've spoke again, and scared one away. If it hadn't been for you I should have got I don't know how many by this time. (*Prudy begins to cry.*) Poh! crying about that? You're a nice little girl if you do talk too much, so don't you cry. (*Prudy dries her eyes and looks cheerful again.*) I'll tell you what it is, I don't think I make much playing "hookey."

PRUDY.—I don't like playing "hookey," neither, 'cause the hooks won't catch 'em.

HORACE (*laughing*).—Oh, you don't know what I mean. When we boys "out west" stay out of school, we call *that* playing "hookey."

PRUDY.—Oh, do you? But I want to go home now, if we can't catch any nibbles.

A VOICE WITHIN.—Prudy! Prudy!

HORACE.—There, now, there's Aunt Madge calling you. You give me your fish-pole. Can you crawl through the bushes?

PRUDY.—I don't know. I guess you'll have to push some. (*She scratches through while Horace pushes.*)

HORACE.—Now hurry up but don't you tell her that I was here. I'll go round the other way. (*Prudy goes out on one side and Horace on the other.*)

HEARSAY.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Roscoe Rankin, *a well-dressed man who appears a stranger.*

Mr. Runround Gosline, *a dapper little man who carries gossip.*

Situation.—Mr. Rankin *returns home after some weeks of absence from the town.* Mr. Gosline *notices him at the railway station and proceeds to gossip with him.*

Mr. Rankin *must have a letter on which are written the words which* Gosline *reads; and* Gosline *should have an opera-glass or a telescope.* Rankin *may have all his first speech within quotation marks written on the paper.*

Enter Rankin, *reading a letter.*

Rankin (*reading aloud*).—"Edward has been much better since he has been living with me, and his cough is growing less. I hope our pure mountain air will cure him. The little stranger you have never seen reminds me constantly of her father. What a comfort she is to me! How could I support your absence without her?" Dear, dear Emily! Now that our meeting is at hand, I feel like delaying the great pleasure, as if the mere anticipation were a joy too great to be given up! (*Reads to himself.*)

Enter MR. GOSLINE *with his hands in his pockets.*

GOSLINE (*he looks Rankin all over, then tries to get a look at the letter. Aside*).—Who can this be, I wonder? (*Looks at letter again.*) I *do* wish women would not write such a tiny little hand. (*Reads.*) Most—p-r-e—precious, —most—beloved." Most precious! Most beloved! Oh, Cupid! How tender! Now, you wouldn't believe it—but I never had such things said to *me* by one of the fair sex! (*Reads again.*) "Edward—has—Edward has—" Perhaps I can make it out better with my glass. (*He takes an opera-glass from his pocket and looks. Rankin turns round and catches him.*)

RANKIN (*folds up letter*).—You seem, sir, to be of an inquiring turn of mind.

GOSLINE.—Well, sir, if I wasn't, this village, let me tell you, would be a pretty slow place,—altogether behind the times. You're a stranger in these parts, I suspect.

RANKIN.—What makes you think so?

GOSLINE.—You kind of stared about you, when you got out of the cars, as if the country didn't look familiar.

RANKIN.—There have been some changes since I was here. Do you know a Mrs. Rankin in the village?

GOSLINE.—The little lady that lives in the brown cottage on the hill over there?

RANKIN.—The same.

GOSLINE.—Well, I can't say I visit her, but I can tell you all about her. Poor woman!

RANKIN.—Why do you say that? Is anything the matter with her?

GOSLINE.—She has had a hard time of it. It's enough to make one's heart bleed. Poor young thing! A month after her marriage, and just as she had got fixed there in the cottage, her scamp of a husband ran off to California.

RANKIN.—Scamp of a husband! Ran off! (*Indignant.*) What do you mean, sir? (*Checking himself.*) Excuse me. What did he run off for?

GOSLINE.—For robbing a bank. What do you think of that?

RANKIN.—For robbing a bank?

GOSLINE.—So they say.

RANKIN.—Who say?

GOSLINE.—*They* say.

RANKIN.—Who are *They?*

GOSLINE.—Everybody says. People say. The world generally say. The whole village say.

RANKIN.—Can you name a single person, besides yourself, who says it?

GOSLINE.—Really so many people say it, that I cannot think of any one in particular.

RANKIN.—Perhaps I will quicken your memory by and by. And how does Mrs. Rankin bear her afflictions?

GOSLINE.—She's on the point of being married again. So they say.

RANKIN.—Indeed! To whom?

GOSLINE.—To a Mr. Edward Edwards. So they say.

RANKIN (*aside*).—Her own brother! (*Aloud.*) Are you sure of this?

GOSLINE.—Oh, yes! He has been residing in the house with her. They take romantic walks together. They read Tennyson together. The wedding is to take place immediately. So they say.

RANKIN.—Who say?

GOSLINE.—Well, I told you! *They* say. What would you have more?

RANKIN.—Who are *they?*

GOSLINE.—How should I know? You are the most un-

reasonable man I ever met with. I say *they* say, and you ask me *who* say. As if I could say anything else!

RANKIN (*he becomes angry and approaches Gosline who retreats. Thus they go all round the platform*).—Did *They Say*, ever say that you were a meddling, prying, gossiping, impertinent, mischievous, unscrupulous, malicious retailer of absurd slanders?

GOSLINE.—What do you mean, sir, by such language? I'll have you arrested. Lawyer Doolittle is my particular friend. If there was only a witness here, sir, I'd make you pay for this outrage. Keep your hands off, sir! (*He sees someone approaching.*) No matter, sir; kick me—kick me! I see a witness yonder. I'll have you arrested for assault and battery. Kick me, if you like.

RANKIN.—I shall not indulge you so far. But take warning, sir, how you quote Mr. *They Say* for your scandalous reports. Old *They Say* is a liar and a coward.

GOSLINE.—That's libellous, sir. You are libelling the whole village when you say that. I wish I knew your name.

RANKIN.—You shall know it. My name is Rankin, and that cottage on the hill, there, is mine.

GOSLINE.—Wheugh! You Mr. Rankin?

RANKIN.—The same.

GOSLINE.—Didn't you once rob a bank?

RANKIN.—I once picked a rose from a bank in a friend's garden, and another friend playfully said that he had caught me robbing a bank. Some stupid men heard him say it, and may have repeated it. This is all there is to your story.

GOSLINE.—But isn't your wife going to be married. Doesn't she walk out every day with a young man? Ha! Do I speak too rudely of your home-ties?

RANKIN.—That young man is her poor, consumptive brother, who has come here for change of air. Let me

advise you, friend *They Say*, to look out another time; or the consequences will be unpleasant.

GOSLINE.—What consequences, sir?

RANKIN.—Why, sir, the price of cowhides, in this village, will go suddenly up. (*He goes out.*)

GOSLINE.—Now, isn't it provoking hat such a nice bit of gossip should be spoiled? No matter! There is a report that the Rev. Mr. Poor has been seen playing at ninepins. He does it for his health, he says. Ha, ha, ha! For his health, indeed! I'll make a nice stir-up in his congregation about this. We'll have a meeting of the parish (*rubbing his hands*),—perhaps a council of ministers,—and there'll be a precious tempest at every tea-table in the village. Ha, ha! I see sport ahead—sport—sport! (*He goes out.*)

TIRED OF CHURCH.

CHARACTERS.

Mrs. Harmon, *a rather young woman dressed for church.*

Willie Harmon, *her small son in his best clothes.*

Situation.—Mrs. Harmon *has taken her young son to church after a strong injunction not to talk while he is there. He cannot resist the temptation to ask questions. She has finally to take him home.*

Some rows of seats or some benches may be placed on the platform to represent the pews in the church and the aisle. There may be some music by the choir or quartette while they come in and take their seats; or the curtain may be thrown back and reveal them already seated.

Mrs. Harmon *and* Willie *come in respectfully and take seats in their pew, while the organ plays or the choir sings.*

Willie (*after looking round a moment in silence*).—Mamma, what kind of flowers has that lady got in her bonnet?

Mrs. Harmon.—You mustn't talk so loud, dear, you'll disturb the congregation.

Willie.—They look like Johnnie-jump-ups, don't they?

Mrs. Harmon.—Hush, dear. Listen to the sermon.

WILLIE (*after a long silence*).—Are they real flowers, mamma, or only make believe?

MRS. HARMON.—They are artificial, Willie. Be a good boy, now, and don't talk any more.

WILLIE.—Yes'm. (*A very long pause*). Mamma!

MRS. HARMON.—'Sh, Willie! What is it?

WILLIE.—When Johnnie-jump-ups are growed up, do they get to be jumpin-jacks?

MRS. HARMON (*with a struggle to keep from smiling*).—Oh, no, dear.

WILLIE.—Why not?

MRS. HARMON.—There, dear. Listen to the sermon.

WILLIE.—What do they get to be?

MRS. HARMON (*with a look of despair*).—They don't get to be anything. They stay just what they are.

WILLIE (*after another silence*).—Mamma, the preacher said "thudly." How many morelys will he——

MRS. HARMON.—'Sh, Willie!

WILLIE.—Yes'm, but I'm getting awfully tired.

MRS. HARMON.—It will only last a little while longer, dear. Be quiet.

WILLIE.—Yes'm. (*A pause.*) Mamma, can a woman be real, real good if she wears a stuffed humming-bird on her bonnet?

MRS. HARMON.—Willie, if you don't hush I shall have to punish you.

WILLIE.—Right here?

MRS. HARMON.—No; after we get home. 'Sh!

WILLIE (*after a thoughtful pause*).—Mamma, seems to me that I've been 'sh-ing a mighty long time! How much longer is he going to——

MRS. HARMON (*with determination*).—Willie, if you say another word I'll take you right out of church.

WILLIE (*his face lights up*).—I won't say another word, mamma, but I'm getting jus horrid tired, and I don't see how I can set still another minute, and I wish he'd quit talkin'—ain't you tired 'most to death—how much longer is he going to keep on—what's the use of bringing me here, anyhow—(*His mother takes him down from his seat and marches him out of church. He looks back with a triumphant smile*).

THE INKSTAND.

CHARACTERS.

Dollie, *a very little girl.*

Amy, Minnie, *two larger girls with aprons on.*

Robbie, *a small boy.*

Aunt Anna, *an irritable woman of middle age.*

Aunt Martha, *a woman of same age with muslin cap on and a white apron.*

Bridget, *a servant of Aunt Martha, with sleeves rolled up and apron on.*

Situation.—AUNT ANNA *has brought over the girls to spend the day with their* AUNT MARTHA. ROBBIE *has been deputed to show them over the house and has at last reached* BRIDGET'S *room.* DOLLIE *finds an inkstand which* ROBBIE *auctions off to the highest bidder. The ink is spilled on* MINNIE'S *apron and* DOLLIE *is sent after milk to take the stain off. She unwittingly reports the whole disaster and the children are summarily taken home.*

The first scene is in BRIDGET'S *chamber, which contains a washstand, bureau, chairs and table. The second scene is in the kitchen or dining-room where dinner is preparing. There is a table partially set for dinner, with cloth and dishes on it. The inkstand may be empty or filled with water.*

Scene I.

ROBBIE *enters, followed by* AMY, MINNIE *and* DOLLIE.

ROBBIE.—This is Bridget's room.

AMY.—Well, I'm dreadful tired.

MINNIE.—So am I. I'm going to sit down a minute. (*All sit but Dollie who goes to the bureau and opens a drawer.*)

AMY.—Look here, Dolly Dinsmore, you mustn't open that drawer.

DOLLIE (*putting in both hands*).—Who owns it?

AMY.—Why, Bridget does, of course.

DOLLIE.—No, she doesn't. God owns this drawer, and he's willing I should look into it as long as I'm a mind to.

AMY.—Well, I'll tell Aunt Anna, you see if I don't. That's the way little paddy girls act that steal things.

DOLLIE.—I ain't a stealer. Now, Amy Rexford, I saw you once, and you was a nippin' cream out of the cream-pot. *You're* a paddy!—Oh, here's a *inkstand!*

MINNIE.—Put it right back, and come away.

ROBBIE (*seizing it from her hand*).—Let me take it. I'm going to put it up at auction. I'm Mr. Nelson, riding horseback. (*He jumps up on a stand.*) I'm ringin' a bell. "O yes! O yes! O yes! Auction at two o'clock! Who'll buy my fine fresh ink?"

AMY.—Please give it to me, it isn't yours.

ROBBIE.—Fresh ink, red as a lobster!

AMY.—This minute!

ROBBIE.—As green as a pea! Who'll bid? Going! Going!

MINNIE (*climbing into a chair and reaching after it*).—Now, do give it to me, Robbie. You ain't fair a bit.

ROBBIE.—Do you say you bid a *bit?* That's ninepence, ma'am. It's yours; going, gone for a ninepence, knocked off to Miss Dinsmore. (*As Robbie hands it to Minnie, she grabs at it and spills the ink over her apron.*)

MINNIE.—Oh, dear, how dreadful!

ROBBIE (*he has climbed down hastily*).—Don't tell that

I did it, you know I didn't mean any harm. Won't you promise me not to tell?

MINNIE.—Yes, I will—O dear, O dear! What is to be done?

AMY.—Come here quick. (*She pulls her to the wash-stand. Dollie thinks Amy is going to put Minnie into the wash bowl and tries to lift her up*).

MINNIE (*catching at a piece of soap*).—I guess this honey soap will take it out. (*They scrub hard at the apron.*)

AMY.—Stop a minute! Soap makes it worse—ma puts on milk.

MINNIE.—O dear! I wish we had some. How can we get it?

Amy.—I'll tell you what we'll do; we'll send Dollie down-stairs to Bridget, to ask for some milk to drink.

DOLLIE.—I like milk and water the best—with sugar in.

AMY.—Well, get that, its just as good; and come right back with it, and don't tell about the ink. (*Dollie goes out.*)

CURTAIN.

Scene II.

The kitchen or dining-room.

AUNT MARTHA *and* BRIDGET *are getting dinner ready.* DOLLIE *enters.*

DOLLIE.—Oh, Bridget, may I have some white tea?

BRIDGET.—White *tay!* and what may that be now?

DOLLIE.—Oh, some white tea in a cup, you know, with sugar. They let me have it every little once in a while.

AUNT MARTHA.—Milk and water, I suppose. Can't you wait till dinner, my dear?

DOLLIE.—But the girls *can't* wait; they want it now.

AUNT MARTHA.—Oh, it's for the girls, is it?

DOLLIE.—Yes, but when they've washed the apron I can drink the rest—with white sugar in.

AUNT MARTHA.—The apron! What apron?

AUNT ANNA *enters at rear.*

DOLLIE.—Oh, nothing but Minnie's, I told grandma I'd be good, and I did be good; it was n't *me* spilled the ink.

AUNT MARTHA (*stopping her work*).—Ink spilled?

DOLLIE (*beginning to tremble*).—Oh, I ain't goin' to tell! I didn't, did I? They won't '*low* me to tell.

AUNT ANNA (*stepping to the door*).—Children, come down here this instant. What have you been doing?

Enter AMY *and* MINNIE *with crestfallen faces.*

Oh, Minnie Dinsmore, you naughty, naughty child, what have you been into? Who spilled that ink?

MINNIE (*frightened*).—It got tipped over.

AUNT ANNA.—Of course, it got tipped over—but not without hands, you careless girl! Do you get your shaker, and march home as quick as ever you can! I must go with you, I suppose.

AMY.—Oh, Auntie, she wasn't to blame. It——

AUNT ANNA (*briskly*).—Don't say a word. If she was my little girl I'd have her sent to bed. That dress and apron ought to be soaking this very minute. (*She marches the children all off, followed by Aunt Martha.*)

BRIDGET.—It's not much like the child's mother she is. A mother can pass it by when the childers does such capers, and wait till they git more sinse. (*She goes out the other side.*)

THE SWORD.

CHARACTERS.

Lord Carlton, *a kind and polite gentleman.*

Augustus, *his son, haughty and overbearing.*

Henrietta, *his daughter, gentle and shrewd.*

Frank Raynton, William Raynton, Edward Dudley, Charles Dudley, *manly and independent boys, friends to Augustus.*

James, *a servant to Lord Carlton.*

Situation.—AUGUSTUS *has a birthday. His father presents him with a sword, which his sister takes to put a ribbon on it. Before she returns it,* LORD CARLTON, *fearing that the weapon may prove dangerous in the hands of his impertinent son, substitutes a turkey's feather for the blade. The confusion of the boy is complete. The sword is given to another.*

Both scenes of this dialogue take place in the play-room of AUGUSTUS. *Considerable ingenuity may be shown in fitting this room as a parent of taste and wealth would be likely to furnish it. There should be a table on which* HENRIETTA *may place the dish of cakes.*

Scene I.

The apartment of AUGUSTUS. *Enter* AUGUSTUS, *with a haughty strut.*

AUGUSTUS.—Aha! this is my birthday! They did well to tell me for I should never have thought of it. I shall have some new present from papa. Let's see, what will he give me? James had something under his coat when he went into papa's room. He would not let me go in with him. Ah! If I did not have to act grown up, I'd have made him show me what he was carrying.—But now I shall know. Here comes papa.

LORD CARLTON *comes in, holding in his hand a sword and belt.*

LORD CARLTON.—Ah! there you are, Augustus! I have already wished you joy on your birthday; but that is not enough, is it?

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! papa—but what is that in your hand, there?

LORD CARLTON.—Something that I fear will not become you well. A sword—look! (*He holds it out.*)

AUGUSTUS.—What! is it for me? Oh! give it to me, dear papa; I will be so good and study all the time.

LORD CARLTON.—Ah! if I only thought that! But do you know a sword calls for a man? Whoever wears a sword, must be no longer a child, but should be respectful and well-behaved. It is not the sword that adorns the man, but the man who adorns the sword.

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! never fear me. I shall adorn mine, I promise; and I won't speak to those mean persons——

LORD CARLTON.—Whom do you call those mean persons?

AUGUSTUS.—I mean those who cannot wear a sword—those who are not nobles, as you and I are.

LORD CARLTON.—For my part, I know no mean persons but those who have a wrong way of thinking, and a worse way of behaving; who are disobedient to their parents—rude and unmannerly to others; so that I see many mean persons among the nobility, and many noble among those whom you call mean.

AUGUSTUS.—Yes, that's what I think.

LORD CARLTON.—What were you saying, then, just now, of wearing a sword? It is necessary that ranks should be distinguished in the world. But the most elevated rank only adds more disgrace to the man unworthy to fill it.

AUGUSTUS.—But, papa, it will be no disgrace to me to have a sword, and to wear it.

LORD CARLTON.—No. I mean for you to render yourself worthy of this distinction by your good behavior. Here is your sword, but remember. (*He hands him the sword.*)

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! yes, papa. You shall see! (*He endeavors to put the sword by his side, but cannot. Lord Carlton helps him to buckle it on.*)

LORD CARLTON.—Eh! why, it does not look bad.

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! I knew.

LORD CARLTON.—It becomes you surprisingly. But above all things, remember what I told you. Good-bye! (*Going, he returns.*) I had forgot; I have just sent for a little party of your friends, to spend the day with you. Behave yourself suitably. (*He goes out.*)

AUGUSTUS.—Yes, papa. (*He struts up and down the room, and now and then looks back to see if his sword is behind him.*) This is fine! This is like a gentleman! Let any of your citizens come in my way now. No more familiarity, if they do not wear a sword; and if they don't like it, out with my rapier. But let us see if it has a good blade. (*Drawing his sword and using furious gestures.*) What!

does that man mean to affront me? One—two! Ah! you defend yourself, do you? Die, scoundrel!

Enter HENRIETTA.

HENRIETTA (*who screams on hearing the last words*).—Bless me! Augustus, are you mad?

AUGUSTUS.—Is it you, sister?

HENRIETTA.—Yes, don't you see? But what are you doing with that thing? (*Pointing to the sword.*)

AUGUSTUS.—Doing with it? what a gentleman should do.

HENRIETTA.—And whom are you going to send out of the world?

AUGUSTUS.—Whoever dares insult me.

HENRIETTA.—And if I should happen to be the person——

AUGUSTUS.—You! I warn you. I wear a sword now, you see. Papa made me a present of it.

HENRIETTA.—I suppose to go and kill people, right or wrong.

AUGUSTUS.—Am not I the honorable? If they do not give me the respect due, smack, a box on the ear. And if your little commoner will be impertinent—sword in hand —(*Going to draw it.*)

HENRIETTA.—Oh! leave it in quiet, brother. What is the respect that you demand?

AUGUSTUS.—You shall soon see. My father has just sent for some young fellows. If those little puppies do not behave themselves respectfully, you shall see how I will manage.

HENRIETTA.—Very well; but what must we do, to behave ourselves respectfully toward you?

AUGUSTUS.—In the first place, I insist upon a low bow—very low.

HENRIETTA (*with great seriousness making him a low*

courtesy).—Your lordship's most humble servant. Was that well?

AUGUSTUS.—No joking, Henrietta, or else——

HENRIETTA.—Nay, I am quite serious, I assure you. We ought to inform your little friends, too.

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! I will have some sport with those fellows; give one a pull, another a pinch, and play all sorts of tricks on them.

HENRIETTA.—But if those fellows should not like the sport, and return it on the gentleman's ears——

AUGUSTUS.—What! low, vulgar blood? No; they have neither hearts nor swords.

HENRIETTA (*with sarcasm*).—Really, papa saw plainly what a hero was concealed in the person of his son, but do you know too, that there is one principal ornament to your sword wanting?

AUGUSTUS.—What is that? (*Unbuckles the belt and looks all over the sword.*) I do not see that there is the least thing wanting.

HENRIETTA.—Really, you are a very clever swordsman. But a sword-knot now! Ah! how a blue and silver knot would dangle from that belt!

AUGUSTUS.—You are right, Henrietta. Quick, a handsome knot! when my little party comes, they shall see me in all my grandeur.

HENRIETTA.—Give it to me, then.

AUGUSTUS (*giving her the sword*).—There, make haste! You will leave it in my room, on the table, so I may find it when I want it.

HENRIETTA.—Depend on me.

Enter JAMES.

JAMES.—The two Master Dudleys and the Master Rayntons are below.

AUGUSTUS.—Well! cannot they come up?

JAMES.—My lady ordered me to tell you to come and meet them.

AUGUSTUS.—No, no—it is better to wait for them here.

HENRIETTA.—If mamma wants you to go down——

AUGUSTUS.—Well, I shall go right away. Come, what are you doing? Go, hurry, and let me find it on my table. Do you hear? (*Augustus and James go out.*)

HENRIETTA.—The little insolent! Luckily, I have the sword. My papa does not know you so well as I do. But I'll tell him—ah! here he is.

Enter LORD CARLTON.

HENRIETTA.—You are come just in time, papa. I was going to you.

LORD CARLTON.—What is there, then, of so much consequence, to tell me?—But what are you doing with your brother's sword?

HENRIETTA.—I have promised to put a handsome knot on it; but it was only to get it out of his hands. Do not give it to him again, whatever you do.

LORD CARLTON.—Why should I take back a present I have given him?

HENRIETTA.—At least keep it until he becomes more peaceable. I just now found him all alone, laying about him like Don Quixote, and threatening to make his first trial of fencing on his companions that come to see him.

LORD CARLTON.—The little quarreler! If he will use it for his first exploits, they shall not turn out to his honor, I promise you. Give me the sword.

HENRIETTA (*giving him the sword*).—There, sir, I hear him on the stairs.

LORD CARLTON.—Run, make his knot, and bring it to me when it is ready. (*They go out.*)

Scene II.

Enter AUGUSTUS, *with his hat on. Then follow with uncovered heads*, EDWARD *and* CHARLES DUDLEY, FRANK *and* WILLIAM RAYNTON.

EDWARD (*aside to Frank*).—This is a very polite reception!

FRANK (*aside to Edward*).—I suppose it is the fashion now to receive company with your hat on, and to walk before them into your own house.

AUGUSTUS.—What are you mumbling there?

EDWARD.—Nothing, Mr. Carlton; nothing.

AUGUSTUS.—It is something that I should not hear?

FRANK.—Perhaps.

AUGUSTUS.—Now I insist upon knowing it.

FRANK.—When you have a right to demand it.

EDWARD.—Softly, Raynton—we are in a strange house——

FRANK.—It is still less becoming to be impolite in one's own house.

AUGUSTUS (*haughtily*).—Impolite! Impolite! Is it because I walked before you?

FRANK.—That is the very reason. Whenever we receive your visits, or those of any other person, we never go in first.

AUGUSTUS.—You only do your duty. But from you to me— (*He waves his hand disdainfully*).

FRANK.—What, then, from you to me?

AUGUSTUS.—Are you noble?

FRANK (*to the two Dudleys and his brother*).—Let us leave him to himself, with his nobility, if you will take my advice.

EDWARD.—Oh! Mr. Carlton! if you think it beneath

your dignity to keep company with us, why did you invite us here? We did not ask to come.

AUGUSTUS.—I did not invite you; it was my papa.

FRANK.—Then we will go to my lord, and thank him for his civility. At the same time, we shall let him know that his son thinks it a dishonor to receive us. Come, brother.

AUGUSTUS (*stopping him*).—You cannot take a joke, Master Raynton. Why, I am very happy to see you. Papa invited you to please me, for this is my birthday. Please, stay with me.

FRANK.—This is another thing. But be more polite hereafter. I have not a title as you have, but I will not allow any one to insult me, just the same.

EDWARD.—Be quiet, Raynton, we should be good friends.

CHARLES.—This is your birthday, then, Mr. Carlton?

EDWARD.—I wish you many happy returns of it.

FRANK.—So do I, sir; and all manner of prosperity, (*aside*) and particularly that you may grow a little more polite.

WILLIAM.—I suppose you had han some presents.

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! of course.

CHARLES.—Lots of cakes and sweetmeats.

AUGUSTUS.—Ha! ha! cakes! that would be pretty, indeed. I have them every day.

WILLIAM.—Ah! then, it is money. Two or three dollars?

AUGUSTUS (*disdainfully*).—Something better, and which I alone of all here—yes, I alone, have a right to wear. (*Frank and Edward talk aside.*)

WILLIAM. If I had what has been given to you, I could wear it as well as another, perhaps.

AUGUSTUS (*looking at him contemptuously*). — Poor creature! (*To the two elder brothers.*) What, are you both whispering there again.

Enter HENRIETTA, *with a plate of small cakes.*

HENRIETTA.—Young gentlemen.—I hope you are all happy.

FRANK.—We hope you are the same, miss.

EDWARD.—Miss, we would like to have you stay with us.

HENRIETTA.—Sir, you are very obliging. (*To Augustus.*) Mamma has sent you this, to entertain your friends, until the chocolate is ready. James will bring that up presently, and I shall have the pleasure of helping you.

FRANK.—Miss, thank you very much.

AUGUSTUS.—We do not want you here! But now I think of it, my sword-knot!

HENRIETTA.—You will find the sword and the knot in your room. Good-bye, gentlemen, until I see you again.

FRANK.—Shall we see you soon, miss?

HENRIETTA.—I am going to ask mamma. (*She goes out.*)

AUGUSTUS (*sitting down*).—Come, take chairs and sit down. (*They look at each other, and sit down without speaking. Augustus helps the two younger, and then himself, so plentifully that nothing remains for the two elder.*) Stop a moment! They will bring in more, and then I'll give you some.

FRANK.—Oh! no, we do not want it.

AUGUSTUS.—Oh! with all my heart.

EDWARD.—If this be the politeness of——

AUGUSTUS.—I told you before that they will bring us up something else. (*Haughtily.*) You may take it when it comes, or not take it; you understand that?

FRANK (*indignantly*).—Yes, that is plain enough; and we see plainly, too, what company we are in.

EDWARD.—Are you going to begin your quarrels again? Mr. Carlton. Raynton! (*Augustus rises, all the rest also.*)

AUGUSTUS (*going up to Frank*).—What company are you in, then?

FRANK (*firmly*).—With a young nobleman, who is very rude and very impudent—who values himself more than he ought—and who does not know how well-bred people should behave.

EDWARD.—We are all of the same opinion.

AUGUSTUS.—I, rude and impudent? Me, a gentleman!

FRANK.—Yes, I say it again—very rude and very impudent—though you were a duke, though you were a prince.

AUGUSTUS (*striking him*).—I'll teach you whom you are talking to. (*Frank goes to lay hold on him. Augustus slips back, goes out, and shuts the door.*)

EDWARD.—Bless me, Raynton, what have you done? He will go to his father, and tell him a thousand stories. What will happen to us?

FRANK.—His father is a good man. I will go to him myself if Augustus does not. He certainly has not invited us here to be insulted by his son.

CHARLES.—He will send us home and complain of us.

WILLIAM.—No; my brother behaved himself properly My papa will know.

FRANK.—Come with me. Let us all go and find Lord Carlton.

AUGUSTUS *enters with his sword undrawn. The two younger boys run, one in a corner and the other behind an arm-chair.* FRANK *and* EDWARD *stand firm.*

AUGUSTUS (*going up to Frank*).—Now, I'll teach you, you little insolent. (*Draws, and instead of a blade, finds a long turkey's feather. He stops short in confusion. The little ones burst into a loud laugh and come up.*)

FRANK.—Come on! let us see your sword!

EDWARD.—Do not make it worse. It is bad enough now.

WILLIAM.—Aha! This was what you alone had a right to wear.

CHARLES (*in mockery*).—What a terrible weapon!

FRANK.—I could punish you, but I blush to take revenge.

EDWARD.—Let us all leave him.

WILLIAM.—Good-bye to you, Mr. Knight of the turkey's feather.

CHARLES (*with mock terror*).—We shall not come again, you are too terrible now. (*As they are going, Frank stops them.*)

FRANK.—Let us stay and see his father. Appearances will be against us.

EDWARD.—You are right. What would he think of us, if we left without seeing him?

LORD CARLTON *comes in. They all put on an air of respect.* AUGUSTUS *goes aside and cries for spite.*

LORD CARLTON (*looking at Augustus with indignation*).—Well, sir, you have honored your sword nobly—shame! sir, shame! (*Augustus sobs, but cannot speak.*)

FRANK.—My lord, pardon this disturbance. From the first moment of our coming, Mr. Carlton received us so——

LORD CARLTON.—Do not be uneasy, my dear little friend. I know all. I was in the next room, and heard, from the beginning, my son's unbecoming speech. He had just been making me the fairest promises. I have suspected his impertinence for a long time, but I wished to see for myself, and for fear of mischief, I put a blade to his sword, that, as you see, will not spill much blood. (*The children burst out a-laughing.*)

FRANK (*in apology*).—My lord, I spoke a little bluntly.

LORD CARLTON (*to Frank*).—You are an excellent young

gentleman, and deserve much better than he does, to wear this badge of honor. As a token of my esteem and acknowledgment, accept this sword; but I will first put a blade to it that may be worthy of you. (*He pulls from under his coat the proper blade.*)

FRANK.—Your lordship is too good; but allow us to withdraw.

LORD CARLTON.—No, no, my dear boys, you shall stay. Come with me into another apartment. As for you, sir, (*to Augustus*) do not offer to stir from this place. You may celebrate your birthday here all alone. You shall never wear a sword again until you deserve one. (*He goes out followed by the boys. Augustus slinks along opposite side and then out.*)

FAUNTLEROY AND THE EARL.

Adapted by Mr. H. Q. Emery, from "Little Lord Fauntleroy," by Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett.

CHARACTERS.

Earl of Dorincourt, *a very tall, straight man, with hooked nose and white hair.*

Lord Fauntleroy, *a beautiful little boy of seven, with light curly hair—grandson to the Earl.*

A Footman.

Situation.—LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY'S *father married in America, was disinherited by the* EARL, *and not long after died. The* EARL'S *other sons died without children, and so the* EARL *relented and sent for* LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY, *as he was then to be called.*

The following dialogue is the first appearance of the little boy before his grandfather. His mother, whom he calls DEAREST *lives at the Lodge just outside the park in which the* EARL'S *castle is located.*

The EARL *has deep, fierce eyes, and a harsh voice. He is a cruel, hard-hearted man, who suffers from the gout.* FAUNTLEROY *is an exceedingly lovable little fellow of the utmost courage and innocence. He is dressed in a black velvet suit, with a large lace collar, and with a sash at his waist. He believes in everybody and thinks everyone trusts him.*

The dialogue takes place in the library of Dorincourt Castle, a large room with massive furniture in it and shelves of books.

Enter the EARL OF DORINCOURT, *walking with difficulty, and using a cane. He comes down and sits beside table, putting his gouty foot on foot-rest; he speaks as he comes down.*

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—All done for effect! She thinks I shall admire her spirit! I don't admire it! It's only American independence! I won't have her living like a beggar at my park gates. As she's the boy's mother she has a position to keep up, and she shall keep it up. She shall have the money whether she likes it or not. She shan't tell people that she has to live like a pauper because I have done nothing for her. She wants to give the boy a bad opinion of me!

Enter FOOTMAN.

FOOTMAN (*with a bow*).—Lord Fauntleroy, my lord. (*He goes out on other side.*)

Enter LORD FAUNTLEROY. *He comes slowly down, looking all around him until he discovers the Earl.*

FAUNTLEROY.—How do you do? Are you the Earl? I'm your grandson, you know, that Mr. Havisham brought. I'm Lord Fauntleroy. (*Holds out his hand.*) I hope you are very well. I'm very glad to see you.

(*The Earl shakes hands, after looking him over from head to foot.*)

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Glad to see me, are you?

FAUNTLEROY.—Yes, very. (*He sits in chair the other side of table and looks at the Earl.*) I've kept wondering

what you would look like. I used to lie in my berth in the ship and wonder if you would be anything like my father.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Am I?

FAUNTLEROY.—Well, I was very young when he died, and I may not remember exactly how he looked, but I don't think you are like him.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—You are disappointed, I suppose?

FAUNTLEROY.—Oh, no; of course you would like any one to look like your father, but of course you would enjoy the way your grandfather looked, even if he wasn't like your father. You know how it is yourself about admiring your relations. (*The Earl leans back and stares at him.*)

FAUNTLEROY.—Any boy would love his grandfather. Especially one that had been as kind to him as you have been.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Oh, I have been kind to you, have I?

FAUNTLEROY.—Yes; I'm ever so much obliged to you about Bridget, and the apple-woman, and Dick.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Bridget! Dick! The apple-woman!

FAUNTLEROY.—Yes, the ones you gave me all that money for—the money you told Mr. Havisham to give me.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Ha! That's it, is it? The money you were to spend as you liked. What did you buy with it?

FAUNTLEROY.—Well, you see, Michael had the fever.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Who's Michael?

FAUNTLEROY.—Michael's Bridget's husband, and they were in great trouble. When a man's sick and can't work, and has twelve children, you know how it is. And Bridget used to come to our house and cry, and I went in to see her, and Mr. Havisham sent for me and he said you had

given him some money for me. And I ran as fast as I could and gave it to Bridget and that made it all right. That's why I'm so obliged to you.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Oh! That was one of the things you did for yourself, was it? What else?

FAUNTLEROY.—Well, there was Dick. You'd like Dick. He's so square.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—What does that mean?

FAUNTLEROY (*thoughtfully*).—I think it means he wouldn't cheat anybody, or hit a boy who was under his size, and that he blacks people's boots very well and makes them shine as much as he can. He's a professional bootblack.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—And he's one of your acquaintances, is he?

FAUNTLEROY.—He's an old friend of mine. Not quite as old as Mr. Hobbs, but quite old. (*The Earl looks at him in bewilderment.*)—You don't wear your coronet all the time?

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—No, it is not becoming to me.

FAUNTLEROY.—Mr. Hobbs said you always wore it; but after he thought it over he said he supposed you must sometimes take it off to put your hat on.

EARL OF DORINCOURT (*he gives a sharp glance at him and a half laugh*).—Yes, I take it off occasionally.

FAUNTLEROY (*looks around room*).—You must be very proud of your house, it's such a beautiful house. I never saw anything so beautiful, but of course as I'm only seven, I haven't seen much.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—And you think I should be very proud, do you?

FAUNTLEROY.—I should be proud of it if it were my house. Everything about it is beautiful. It's a very big house for just two people to live in, isn't it?

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—It is quite large enough for two. Do you find it too large?

FAUNTLEROY (*hesitates*).—I was only thinking that if two people lived in it who were not very good companions they might feel lonely sometimes.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—Do you think I shall make a good companion?

FAUNTLEROY.—Yes. I think you will. Mr. Hobbs and I were great friends. He was the best friend I had except Dearest.

EARL OF DORINCOURT (*lifts eyebrows*).—Who is Dearest?

FAUNTLEROY.—She is my mother. (*He sighs.*) I—I think I'd better get up and walk up and down the room. (*He does so with his hands in his pockets.*)

EARL OF DORINCOURT (*watching him a moment or two*). —Come here.

FAUNTLEROY (*goes to him*).—I never was away from my own house before. It makes a person have a strange feeling when he has to stay all night in another person's castle instead of his own house. But Dearest is not very far away from me.

EARL OF DORINCOURT (*knits his brow, then looks at Fauntleroy*).—I suppose you think you are fond of her.

FAUNTLEROY.—Yes. I do think so and I think it's true. My father left her to me to take care of and when I'm a man I am going to work and earn money for her.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—What do you think of doing?

FAUNTLEROY.—I did think of going into business with Mr. Hobbs; but I should *like* to be a President.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—We'll send you to the House of Lords instead.

FAUNTLEROY.—Well, if I couldn't be a President, and if

that is a good business, I shouldn't mind. The grocery business is dull sometimes.

Enter FOOTMAN.

FOOTMAN.—Dinner is served, my lord.

FAUNTLEROY (*looks at Earl's foot*).—Would you like me to help you? You could lean on me, you know. Once Mr. Hobbs hurt his foot with a potato barrel rolling on it, and he used to lean on me.

EARL OF DORINCOURT (*looks at him a moment*).—Do you think you could do it.

FAUNTLEROY.—I *think* I could. I'm seven, you know. You could lean on your stick on one side, and Dick says I've a good deal of muscle for a boy of seven. (*He doubles up his arm to show his muscle.*)

EARL OF DORINCOURT (*waves footman away*).—Well, you may try. (*Gets up and puts hand on Fauntleroy's shoulder.*)

FAUNTLEROY.—Don't be afraid of leaning on me, I'm all right—if—if it isn't a very long way. (*They slowly go up the room, the boy staggering under the Earl's weight.*) Does your foot hurt you very much when you stand on it? Did you ever put it in hot water and mustard? Mr. Hobbs used to put his in hot water. Arnica is a very nice thing, they tell me.

EARL OF DORINCOURT.—No, I never tried hot water. Pretty heavy, am I not?

FAUNTLEROY.—Well, a little; but I'm all right. Lean on me, grandfather—just lean on me. (*Both go out. Footman has stood at back trying not to laugh, and now goes out after them with a gesture of mirthful despair.*)

THE RECONCILIATION.

Adapted from "Little Women," by Louise M. Alcott.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Lawrence, *an old bald-headed man of irritable temper, with spectacles on.*

Teddy Lawrence, *called* LAURIE, *his grandson.*

Josephine Marsh, *called* JO, *a girl with short hair.*

Situation.—LAURIE *has written letters to* MEG *and so caused considerable trouble. He has implicated* JO, *whose mother has called in all the children concerned, found out the truth and enjoined strict secrecy on all.* LAURIE'S *grandfather has tried in vain to find out his escapade and has threatened to punish him. So* LAURIE *has gone to his room to plan to run away.* JO *pacifies him and then his grandfather, and then goes home.*

Scene I.

LAURIE *sits sulkily at his table, with his head resting on his hands. There is a smart rap at the door.*

LAURIE (*in a threatening tone*).—Stop that, or I'll open the door and make you. (*The knocking is repeated immediately. He goes to the door, opens it quickly and in bounces Jo. He strides across the room.*)

JO (*dropping down artistically on her knees*).—Please forgive me for being so cross. I came to make it up, and can't go away till I have.

LAURIE (*with great show of wisdom*).—It's all right. Get up, and don't be a goose, Jo.

JO (*rising*).—Thank you; I will. Could I ask what's the matter? You don't look exactly easy in your mind.

LAURIE (*indignantly*).—I've been shaken and I won't bear it.

JO.—Who did it?

LAURIE.—Grandfather; if it had been any one else I'd have—(*an energetic gesture of his right arm.*)

JO (*soothingly*).—That's nothing; I often shake you, and you don't mind.

LAURIE.—Pooh! you're a girl, and it's fun; but I'll allow no man to shake *me*.

JO.—I don't think any one would care to try it, if you looked as much like a thunder-cloud as you do now. Why were you treated so?

LAURIE.—Just because I wouldn't say what your mother wanted me for. I'd promised not to tell, and of course I wasn't going to break my word.

JO.—Couldn't you satisfy your grandpa in any other way?

LAURIE.—No; he *would* have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I'd have told my part of the scrape, if I could without bringing Meg in. As I couldn't, I held my tongue, and bore the scolding till the old gentleman collared me. Then I got angry, and bolted, for fear I should forget myself.

JO.—It wasn't nice, but he's sorry, I know; so go down and make up. I'll help you.

LAURIE.—Hanged if I do! I'm not going to be lectured and pummelled by every one, just for a bit of a frolic. I *was* sorry about Meg, and begged pardon like a man; but I won't do it again, when I wasn't in the wrong.

JO.—He didn't know that.

LAURIE.—He ought to trust me, and not act as if I was a baby. It's no use, Jo; he's got to learn that I'm able to take care of myself, and don't need any one's apron-string to hold on by.

Jo (*with a sigh*).—What pepper-pots you are! How do you mean to settle this affair?

LAURIE.—Well, he ought to beg pardon, and believe me when I say I can't tell him what the fuss's about.

Jo.—Bless you! he won't do that.

LAURIE.—I won't go down till he does.

Jo.—Now, Teddy, be sensible; let it pass, and I'll explain what I can. You can't stay here, so what's the use of being melodramatic?

LAURIE.—I don't intend to stay here long anyway. I'll slip off and take a journey somewhere, and when grandpa misses me he'll come round fast enough.

Jo.—I daresay; but you ought not to go and worry him.

LAURIE.—Don't preach. I'll go to Washington and see Brooke. It's gay there, and I'll enjoy myself after the troubles.

Jo (*forgetting herself in the prospect*).—What fun you'd have! I wish I could run off too.

LAURIE.—Come on, then! Why not? You go and surprise your father there, and I'll stir up old Brooke. It would be a glorious joke; let's do it, Jo. We'll leave a letter saying we are all right, and trot off at once. I've got money enough; it will do you good; and be no harm, as you go to your father.

Jo (*looking wistfully out of the window*).—If I was a boy, we'd run away together, and have a capital time; but as I'm a miserable girl, I must be proper, and stop at home. Don't tempt me, Teddy, it's a crazy plan.

LAURIE.—That's the fun of it——

Jo (*covering her ears*).—Hold your tongue! "Prunes and prisms" are my doom, and I may as well make up my mind to it. I came here to moralize, not to hear about things that make me skip to think of.

Laurie (*insinuatingly*).—I know Meg would wet-blanket such a proposal, but I thought you had more spirit.

Jo.—Bad boy, be quiet! Sit down and think of your own sins, don't go making me add to mine. If I get your grandpa to apologize for the shaking, will you give up running away?

Laurie.—Yes,—but you won't do it.

Jo (*to herself as she goes out*).—If I can manage the young one I can the old one. (*Laurie pulls out a railroad map and studies it as curtain goes down.*)

Scene II.

A library. Mr. Lawrence *is seated by a table with books on it. There is a high bookcase and, in another part of the room, high steps.* Jo *taps at the door.*

Mr. Lawrence (*gruffly*).—Come in!

Jo *enters.*

Jo (*blandly*).—It's only me, sir, come to return a book.

Mr. Lawrence (*grimly*).—Want any more?

Jo (*trying to please him*).—Yes, please. I like Old Sam so well I think I'll try the second volume. (*Mr. Lawrence places the steps so as to reach the books and Jo skips up them, and perches on the top step, where she looks the books over.*)

Mr. Lawrence (*walking about the room*).—What has that boy been about? Don't try to shield him. I know he has been in mischief by the way he acted when he came home. I can't get a word from him; and when I threatened

to shake the truth out of him he bolted upstairs, and locked himself into his room.

Jo (*reluctantly*).—He did do wrong but we forgave him, and all promised not to say a word to any one.

Mr. Lawrence.—That won't do; he shall not shelter himself behind a promise from you soft-hearted girls. If he's done anything amiss, he shall confess, beg pardon, and be punished. Out with it, Jo, I won't be kept in the dark.

Jo (*looking a little frightened*).—Indeed, sir, I cannot tell; mother forbade it. Laurie has confessed, asked pardon, and been punished quite enough. We don't keep silence to shield him, but some one else, and it will make more trouble if you interfere. Please don't; it was partly my fault, but it's all right now; so let's forget it, and talk about the "Rambler," or something pleasant.

Mr. Lawrence.—Hang the "Rambler!" Come down and give me your word that this harum-scarum boy of mine hasn't done anything ungrateful or impertinent. If he has, after all your kindness to him, I'll thrash him with my own hands.

Jo (*descending very cheerfully*).—Well, there were some letters written, and they were answered, and then we found out it wasn't the person we supposed, but some one else, and then everybody promised mother not to say anything about—and that's all.

Mr. Lawrence (*rubbing up his hair till it stands on end*).—Hum—ha—well, if the boy held his tongue because he promised, and not from obstinacy, I'll forgive him. He's a stubborn fellow, and hard to manage.

Jo (*courageously*).—So am I; but a kind word will govern me when all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't.

MR. LAWRENCE (*sharply*).—You think I'm not kind to him, then?

JO.—Oh, dear, no, sir; You are rather too kind sometimes, and then just a trifle hasty when he tries your patience. Don't you think you are?

MR. LAWRENCE (*throwing his spectacles on the table*).—You're right, girl, I am! I love the boy, but he tries my patience past bearing, and I don't know how it will end, if we go on so.

JO.—I'll tell you. He'll run away. (*Mr. Lawrence looks troubled and sits down.*) He won't do it unless he is very much worried, and only threatens it sometimes, when he gets tired of studying. I often think I should like to, especially since my hair was cut; (*laughing*) so, if you ever miss us, you may advertise for two boys, and look among the ships bound for India.

MR. LAWRENCE (*relieved*).—You hussy, how dare you talk in that way? Where's your respect for me, and your proper bringing up? Bless the boys and girls! (*He pinches her cheeks.*) What torments they are; yet we can't do without them. Go and bring that boy down to his dinner, tell him it's all right, and advise him not to put on tragedy airs with his grandfather. I won't bear it.

JO (*trying to look pathetic*).—He won't come, sir; he feels badly because you didn't believe him when he said he couldn't tell. I think the shaking hurt his feelings very much.

MR. LAWRENCE (*laughing*).—I'm sorry for that, and ought to thank him for not shaking *me*, I suppose. What the dickens does the fellow expect?

JO (*looking wise*).—If I were you, I'd write him an apology, sir. He says he won't come down till he has one, and talks about Washington, and goes on in an absurd

way. A formal apology will make him see how foolish he is, and bring him down quite amiable. Try it; he likes fun, and this way is better than talking. I'll carry it up, and teach him his duty.

MR. LAWRENCE (*gives her a sharp look, then puts on his spectacles and writes*).—You're a sly puss, but I don't mind being managed by you and Beth. Here, give me a bit of paper, and let us have done with this nonsense. (*He writes and folds the note, while Jo watches him. She drops a kiss on his bald head, takes the note and goes out.*)

Scene III.

A hallway before LAURIE'S *chamber door.*

JO *enters and knocks on the door.*

JO (*slips the note under the door and talks through the keyhole*).—Here is the apology. You're expected down to dinner, and you must act submissive and decorous, and not be foolish. (*She tries the door, finds it locked and starts away.*)

LAURIE *comes out, laughing.*

LAURIE.—What a good fellow you are, Jo! Did you get blown up?

JO.—No, he was pretty mild on the whole.

LAURIE.—Ah! I got it all round. Even you cast me off over there, and I felt just ready to go to the deuce.

JO.—Don't talk in that way; turn over a new leaf and begin again, Teddy, my son.

LAURIE (*dolefully*).—I keep turning over new leaves, and spoiling them, as I used to spoil my copy-books; and I make so many beginnings there never will be an end.

JO.—Go and eat your dinner; you'll feel better after it. Men always croak when they are hungry. (*She hurries out.*)

LAURIE.—That's a "label" on my "sect." (*He goes out.*)

KEEPING HOUSE.

CHARACTERS.

Lizzie Merriam, *a haughty overbearing girl, who wears large rings and a coral necklace.*

Bessie Belmont, *a polite but ambitious girl, who wants to lead others.*

Lucy Dawson, *a quiet girl who loves the truth.*

Mary Dawson, *a sick little girl, who always lies on the sofa.*

Polly Dawson, *a little child full of mischief, who carries a case knife.*

Situation.—BESSIE, *a cousin, and* LIZZIE, *a neighbor, come to play with the* DAWSON *children.* MARY *has fallen down-stairs and injured her leg so she has to have a splint on it, and she is confined to her room. All the girls go there to play. They pretend to keep house until* LIZZIE, *provoked because* LUCY *says she ate up the cake, flies into a passion and rushes home.*

On one side of the platform is a sofa; on the other is a screen behind which is a table partially set with doll's dishes. The platform is otherwise furnished as a sitting room.

MARY *lies on the sofa.* LUCY *enters quietly.*

LUCY.—Mamma says we can play in your room this afternoon.

MARY.—Well, I'm glad, 'cause you haven't played up here for three days.

LUCY.—What shall we play when they come?

MARY.—Who's a-comin' 'cept Polly and you?

LUCY.—Why, Bessie said she would come over, if Aunt Jane would let her, and perhaps Lizzie Merriam will come. (*A noise without.*)

MARY.—Well, I guess they've all of 'em come by the sound.

LUCY (*she opens the door*).—Yes, here's Bessie and Polly and Lizzie.

Enter BESSIE, POLLY *and* LIZZIE.

MARY.—I'm glad to see you all and I think it would be very nice to play house.

BESSIE.—Yes, and then you can take part, too.

LIZZIE.—I will be the lady of the house, because I have rings on my fingers and a coral necklace.—My name is Mrs. Sprat. Mary, you shall be Mrs. Gobang, come a-visiting me; because you can't do anything else. We'll make believe you've lost your husband in the wars. I know a Mrs. Gobang, she is always *taking-on* just this way, and saying, "My poor dear husband!" (*She says the words with a very nasal twang behind her handkerchief, and they all laugh.*)

LUCY.—Well, what shall I be?

LIZZIE.—Oh, you shall be a hired girl, and wear a handkerchief on your head, just as our girl does. And you must be a little deaf and keep saying "What, ma'am?" when I speak to you.

BESSIE.—And I will be Mr. Jack Sprat, the head of the family.

LIZZIE.—Yes, you can put on a waterproof cloak, and you will make quite a good-looking husband; but I shall be the head of the family myself, and have things about as I please.

BESSIE (*putting on her cloak*).—Well, there, I don't know about that; I don't think it's very polite for you to treat your husband in that way.

LIZZIE (*with a toss of the head*).—But I believe in "Woman's Rights" and if there's anything I despise, it is a *man* meddling about the house.

LUCY (*to Polly, who is hitting a knife she has stuck into a crack in a chair, and making a whirring noise*).—I wouldn't do so, Polly, it troubles us, and besides I'm afraid it will break the knife.

LIZZIE (*as Mrs Sprat*).—I don't allow my hired girl to interfere with my children. I am mistress of the house, I'd have you to know. There, little daughter, they shan't plague her. She shall keep on doing mischief, so she shall. (*Polly redoubles her efforts with the knife.*)

MARY (*groaning loudly*).—Oh! oh! oh! My poor husband! all dead of a cannon-bullet! Oh! oh!

LIZZIE (*trying to make conversation*).—My good Mrs. Gobang, I think I have got something in my eye; will you please tell me how it looks?

MARY (*looking into it*).—Oh, your eye looks very well, ma'am. Don't '*xcuse* it, it looks well enough for *me*.

LIZZIE.—Ahem! (*She arranges her dress.*) Are your feet warm, Mrs. Gobang?

MARY.—Thank you, ma'am I don't feel 'em cold. Oh, dear, if your husband was all deaded up, I guess you'd cry, Mrs. Sprat. (*She weeps into her handkerchief.*)

LIZZIE (*with a threatening gesture*).—You must go right out of the parlor, Bridget. I mean you, Lucy,——the parlor isn't any place for hired girls.

LUCY (*inclining her head*).—Ma'am?

LIZZIE (*moaning*).—Oh, dear, the plague of having a deaf girl! You don't know how trying it is, Mrs. Gobang!

That hired girl, Bridget, hears with her elbows, Mrs. Gobang, I verily believe she does.

MARY.—Oh, no, ma'am, I guess she doesn't hear with her elbows, does she ? If she *heard* with her elbows, she wouldn't have to ask you over again. (*Every one laughs and Lucy looks at her elbows*).—Will you please, ma'am, ask Bridget to *hot* a flatiron? I've cried my handkerchief all up.

LIZZIE.—Yes, go right out, Bridget and *hot* a flatiron. Go out, this instant, and build a fire, Bridget.

BESSIE (*as Mr. Sprat*).—Yes, go right out, Bridget. (*Lucy goes out.*)

MARY (*sobbing as Mrs. Gobang*).—It was my darlin' husband's handkerchief.

BESSIE (*laughing*).—Rather a small one for a man.

MARY (*quickly*).—Well, my husband had a very small nose.

LIZZIE (*as Mrs. Sprat*).—Oh, Mrs. Gobang, you ought to be exceeding thankful you're a widow, and don't keep house. I think my hired girls will carry down my gray hairs to the grave. The last one I had was Irish and very Catholic. (*Mary groans and looks for a dry spot on her handkerchief.*) Yes, indeed it was awful, for she was always going to masses and mass-meetings. And there couldn't anybody die but they must be "waked" you know.

MARY (*opened her eyes*).—Why, I didn't know they could be waked up when they was dead.

LIZZIE.—Oh, but they only *make believe* you can wake 'em; of course it isn't true. For my part, I don't believe a word an Irish girl says, any way. (*Polly who has at intervals kept up a noise with the knife now makes a scraping, rasping sound*).—Bridget, Bridget!

LUCY *enters.*

LUCY (*bending her head to one side*).—Ma'am?

LIZZIE.—Why in the world don't you see to that baby? I believe you are losing your mind.

LUCY.—Ma'am?

LIZZIE.—Take her out! (*Lucy takes Polly out.*)

MARY.—That makes me think. What do you s'pose the reason is folks can't be waked up? What makes 'em stay in heaven all the days, and nights and years, and never come down here to see anybody, not a minute?

LIZZIE.—What an idea! I'm sure I don't know.

MARY.—Well, I've been a thinkin', that when God has sended 'em up to the sky, they like to stay up there the best. It's a nicer place, a great deal nicer place, up in God's house.

LIZZIE.—Oh, yes, of course, but our play——

MARY.—I've been a-thinkin' that when I go up to God's house, I sha'n't wear the splint. I can run all over the house, and he'll be willing I should go upstairs; and down cellar, you know. (*She sighs.*)

LIZZIE (*impatiently*).—Well, let's go on with our play. It's most supper-time, Mrs. Gobang. Come in, Bridget.

LUCY *enters.*

LUCY (*turning up one ear*).—Ma'am?

LIZZIE.—Bridget, have you attended to your sister—to my little child, I mean? (*Lucy nods.*) Then go out and make some sassafras-cakes, and some eel-pie, and some squirrel-soup. And set the table in five minutes do you hear?

LUCY.—Ma'am, what did you say about gingerbread?

BESSIE (*as Mr. Sprat*).—Oh, how stupid Bridget is!

Mrs. Sprat says eel-jumbles, and sassafras-pie, and pound-cake, all made in five minutes. (*Everybody laughs.*)

MARY (*sighing*).—Oh, my darlin' husband used to like jumble-pie. I've forgot to cry for ever so long. (*She weeps and turns away her head.*)

LUCY (*she has moved the table into the middle of the floor and gone out. She now returns*).—Please, ma'am. I just made some eel-jumbles and things, and a dog came in and stole them.

LIZZIE.—Very well, Bridget, make some more.

BESSIE.—Yes, make some more, and chain up that dog.

LUCY.—But real honest true, the fruit-cake *is* all gone out of our play chest. You ate it up, you know, Lizzie. But it's no matter. We'll cut up some cookies, or may be mother 'll let us have some oyster-crackers.

LIZZIE (*angrily*).—*I* ate up the cake! It's no such thing, I never touched it!

LUCY.—Oh, but you did. I suppose you've forgotten. You went to the cake-chest this morning, and last night, and yesterday noon, and ever so many more times. (*Lizzie cannot speak from anger.*)—But it's just as well. You could have it as well as not, and perfectly welcome.

LIZZIE (*indignantly*).—What are you talking about? I wonder if you take me for a pig, Lucy Dawson? I heard what your mother said about that cake. She said it was too dry for her company, but it was too rich for little girls, and we must only eat a *teeny* speck at a time. I told my mamma and she laughed, to think such mean dried-up cake was too rich for little girls!

LUCY.—It *was* rich, nice cake, Lizzie, but mother said the slices had been cut a great while, and it was drying up. Let's not talk any more about it.

LIZZIE.—Oh, but I shall talk more about it. You keep

hinting that I tell wrong stories and steal victuals. Yes you do! And you ain't willing to let me speak. (*There is a slight pause for a reply but Lucy says nothing; so Lizzie rises.*) I won't stay here to be imposed upon, and told that I'm a liar and a thief, so I won't! I'll go right home this very minute, and tell my mother just how you treat your company! (*She flounces out of the room in great anger.*)

LUCY (*following her to the door*).—Oh, don't go, Lizzie. Stay and play!

BESSIE (*coolly, as the door slams*).—Well, I'm glad she's gone. She's a bold thing, and my mother wouldn't like me to play with her, if she knew how she acts. She said "victuals" for food and that isn't *elegant*, mother says. What right had she to set up and say she'd be Mrs. Sprat? So forward!

LUCY.—But I'm *sorry* she's gone. I don't like to have her go and tell that I wasn't polite.

MARY.—You *was* polite, a great deal politer'n she was. I wouldn't care if I would be you, Lucy. I don't wish Lizzie was dead, but I wish she was a duck a-sailin' on the water!

CURTAIN.

ADOPT MY BABY.

Adapted from "Timothy's Quest," by Mrs. Kate Douglas Wiggin.

CHARACTERS.

Miss Avilda Cummins, *a young lady dressed as an old maid, very tall, straight, and prim.*

Miss Samantha Ann Ripley, *another young lady, similarly dressed, not quite so severe in aspect.*

Timothy Jessup, *a small boy, in ragged clothes.*

A Baby and a Dog.

Situation.—TIMOTHY *has taken the baby,* LADY GAY, *as she is called, away from their old home in London, because their protector died, and there was a threat of putting them both into some institution. After searching all day, he has at last found a house that suits his ideals. He approaches, and finally gains a home for himself and his little charge.*

The dialogue which follows takes place in the living room of the house. It is plainly furnished. One door opens outdoors and the other into the kitchen.

TIMOTHY *is cheerful, but ragged, and* LADY GAY *is very trusting and dirty. The dog,* RAGS, *is as affectionate and as dirty as any of them.* AVILDA *and* SAMANTHA *are two old maids, whose shrunken affections are warmed by the appearance of something to love.*

A knock at the door on one side. Enter AVILDA *from the other side. She crosses and opens the door, admitting* TIMOTHY, *who drags in a basket containing a baby and a dog, both fast asleep.* AVILDA *starts back in amazement at the sight.*

TIMOTHY.—Do you need any babies here, if you please? (*Avilda is so confused she says nothing but retires a moment through the door she entered.*) I wonder what that marble stone was under the tree at the corner. I guess it must be a country door-plate. It had a lady's name on it anyway. It was "Martha Cummins."

AVILDA *returns.*

TIMOTHY.—Does Miss Martha Cummins live here, if you please?

AVILDA (*half-shocked*).—What do you want?

TIMOTHY (*boldly*).—I want to get somebody to adopt my baby. If you haven't got any of your own, you couldn't find one half as dear and as pretty as she is. And you needn't have me too, you know, unless you should need me to help take care of her.

AVILDA (*sarcastically*).—You're very kind, but I don't think I care to adopt any babies this afternoon, thank you. (*She makes a motion as if to assist them forth.*) You'd better run right back home to your mother, if you've got one, and know where it is, anyhow.

TIMOTHY (*bursting into tears*).—I—I haven't! (*The baby wakes up and wails, and the dog howls.*)

AVILDA (*beside herself with the excitement*).—Samanthy Ann! Samanthy Ann! Come right here and tell me what to do!

Enter SAMANTHA ANN *with a handful of rags she has been sorting.*

SAMANTHA.—Land o' liberty! Where'd they come from, and what air they tryin' to act out?

AVILDA.—This boy's a baby agent, as near as I can make out; he wants I should adopt this red-headed baby, but says I ain't obliged to take him too, and makes out they haven't got any home. I told him I wa'n't adoptin' any babies just now, and at that he burst out cryin', and the other two followed suit. Now, have the three of 'em just escaped from some asylum, or are they too little to be lunatics?

TIMOTHY (*drying his tears and speaking penitently*).—I cried before I thought, because Gay hasn't had anything but cookies since last night, and she'll have no place to sleep unless you'll let us stay here just till morning. We went by all the other houses, and chose this one because this one was so beautiful.

SAMANTHA.—Nothin' but cookies sence—Land o' liberty! (*She starts for the kitchen.*)

AVILDA.—Come back here, Samanthy! Don't you leave me alone with 'em, and don't let's have all the neighbors runnin' in; you take 'em into the kitchen and give 'em somethin' to eat, and we'll see about the rest afterwards.

TIMOTHY (*to Gay*).—Come, get supper.

SAMANTHY (*she opens the door into the kitchen, while Timothy, Gay, and Rags go out*).—Wall, I vow! travelin' over the country all alone, 'n' not knee-high to a toad! They're sendin' out awful young tramps this season, but they shan't go away hungry, if I know it. (*She goes out, while Avilda crosses to opposite side of platform and sinks down in an exhausted condition on the sofa. In a moment, Samantha looks in and Avilda beckons to her to enter. She*

enters.) Now, whatever makes you so panicky, Vildy? Didn't you never see a tramp before, for pity's sake? And if you're scar't for fear I can't handle 'em alone, why, Jabe 'll be comin' along soon. The prospeck of gittin' to bed 's the only thing that'll make him 'n' the mare hurry; 'n' they'll both be cal'latin' on that by this time!

AVILDA.—Samanthy Ann, the first question that that boy asked me was, "If Miss Martha Cummins lived here." Now, what do you make of that?

SAMANTHA (*astonished*).—Asked if Marthy Cummins lived here? How under the canopy did he ever hear Marthy's name? Wall, somebody told him to ask, that's all there is about it. And what harm was there in it, anyhow?

AVILDA.—Oh, I don't know, I don't know; but the minute that boy looked up at me and asked for Martha Cummins, the old trouble, that I thought was dead and buried years ago, started right up in my heart and began to ache just as if it all happened yesterday.

SAMANTHA.—Now, keep stiddy, Vildy; what could happen?

AVILDA (*lowering her voice almost to a whisper*).—Why, it flashed across my mind in a minute, that perhaps Martha's baby didn't die, as they told her.

SAMANTHA.—But, land o' liberty, s'posin' it didn't! Poor Marthy died herself more'n twenty years ago.

AVILDA.—I know; but supposing her baby didn't die; and supposing it grew up and died, and left this little girl to roam round the world afoot and alone?

SAMANTHA.—You're cal'latin' dreadful close, 'pears to me; now, don't go s'posin' any more things. You're makin' out one of them yellow-covered books, sech as the summer boarders bring out here to read; always chock-full of doin's

that never would come to pass in this or any other Christian country. You jest lay down and snuff your camphire, and I'll go out an' pump that boy drier'n' a sand heap. (*She goes out.*)

AVILDA (*she reclines an instant and snuffs a smelling-bottle*).—No, I must go out and see what havoc those young tramps are making. I ought not to have called Samanthy Ann in here. (*She goes out.*)

Enter SAMANTHA, *preceded by* TIMOTHY.

SAMANTHA.—Now, there's one thing I want you to tell me, and that is, what made you ask for Miss Marthy Cummins when you come to the door?

TIMOTHY.—Why, I thought it was the lady-of-the-house's name. I saw it on her door-plate.

SAMANTHA.—But we ain't got any door-plate, to begin with.

TIMOTHY.—Not a silver one on your door, like they have in the city; but isn't that white marble piece in the yard a door-plate? It's got "Martha Cummins, aged 17," on it. I thought maybe in the country they had them in their gardens; only I thought it was queer they put their ages on them, because they'd have to be scratched out every little while, wouldn't they?

SAMANTHA (*in utter astonishment*).—My grief! for pity's sake, don't you know a tombstun when you see it?

TIMOTHY.—No, what is a tombstun?

SAMANTHA.—Land sakes! what do you know, anyway? Didn't you never see a graveyard, where folks is buried?

TIMOTHY.—I never went to the graveyard, but I know where it is, and I know about people's being buried. Flossy is going to be buried. The white stone shows the places where the people are put, and tells their names, does it?

Why, it is a kind of door-plate, after all, don't you see? Who is Martha Cummins, aged 17?

SAMANTHA.—She was Miss Vildy's sister, and she went to the city, and then come home and died here, long years ago. Miss Vildy set great store by her, and can't bear to have her name spoke; so remember what I say. Now, this "Flossy" you tell me about (of all the fool names I ever hearn tell of, that beats all,—sounds like a wax-doll, with her clo'se sewed on!), was she a young woman?

TIMOTHY (*puzzled*).—I don't know whether she was young or not. She had young yellow hair, and very young shiny teeth, white as china; but her neck was crackled underneath, like Miss Vilda's;—it hadn't any kissing-places in it like Gay's.

Enter AVILDA *and the baby asleep.*

AVILDA (*nervously*).—Well, what do you advise doing?

SAMANTHA.—I don't feel competent to advise, Vilda; the house ain't mine, nor yet the beds that's in it, nor the victuals in the butt'ry; but as a professin' Christian and member of the Orthodox Church in good and reg'lar standin', you can't turn 'em ou'doors when it's comin' on dark and they ain't got no place to sleep.

AVILDA.—Plenty of good Orthodox folks turned their backs on Martha when she was in trouble.

SAMANTHA.—There may be Orthodox hogs, for all I know, but that ain't no reason why we should copy after 'em 's I know of.

AVILDA (*coldly*).—I don't propose to take in two strange children and saddle myself with 'em for days or weeks, perhaps, but I'll tell you what I'll do. Supposing we send the boy over to Squire Bean's. It's near haying-time, and he may take him in to help round and do chores. (*Turn-*

ing to Timothy.) We'll keep the baby as long as you get a chance to work anywheres near. (*He stoops down and kisses Gay.*) How'll the baby act when she wakes up and finds you're gone?

TIMOTHY.—Well, I don't know exactly, because she's always had me, you see. But I guess she'll be all right, now that she knows you a little, and if I can see her every day. She never cries except once in a long while when she gets mad; and if you're careful how you behave, she'll hardly ever get mad at you. (*Timothy goes out.*)

AVILDA.—Well, I vow! I guess she'd better do the behaving! (*They carry the baby away.*)

SELLING THE IMAGE.

Adapted from "Toinette's Philip," by Mrs. C. V. Jamison.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Ainsworth, *a prosperous artist.*

Philip, *a handsome boy, with large blue eyes and curling brown hair; he wears a blue shirt and blue trousers, and a white cap; he carries a tray of flowers.*

Dea, *a small girl, in a long dark-red frock; a long white muslin scarf round her neck crosses on her breast, is tied behind her back and falls almost to the ground; a red silk handkerchief covers her head and is knotted under her chin; a covered basket is on her arm.*

Seline, *a large, good-natured colored woman; she wears a white apron and cap.*

Situation.—SELINE *sells fruit and nuts on a street corner in New Orleans. Two waifs,* PHILIP *and* DEA, *interest her.* PHILIP *sells flowers;* DEA *sells little wax images made by her poor and eccentric father.* SELINE *has been away for some weeks and the children have not had good fortune.* SELINE *decides to help* DEA *sell her images and so interests* MR. AINSWORTH, *who pays the price asked and negotiates for more.* DEA'S *quaint*

figure appeals to his artistic instincts and PHILIP *looks like his dead son.*

DEA *carries in her basket two figures, Esmeralda and her goat, and Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre Dame,—characters in Victor Hugo's great novel, Notre Dame. A wolf-dog follows the children as they enter, and lies down under* SELINE'S *stand.*

A street corner. SELINE *is behind her stand, when* PHILIP *and* DEA *come rushing in.*

DEA.—Yes, there she is! (*She runs to her arms.*)

SELINE (*clasping the child*).—Oh, honey, how glad I is ter see yer—an' Mars' Philip, too!—how you's both done growed since I's been gone.

PHILIP (*merrily*).—And how thin you've got, Seline. You've lost flesh going to the country to your cousin's wedding.

SELINE.—My, my, jes' hear dat boy! Do you think I'm slimmer, Mam'selle Dea? (*She looks at her fat sides.*) An' what's you chil'run been erdoin' all dis yere time dat I's been away? An' how's yer *pauv'* papa, Ma'mselle?

DEA (*sighing*).—He's very bad, Seline. He don't sleep.

SELINE.—My, my, honey, I's sorry ter hear sech bad newses. An' is yer done sole any yer little images while I's gone to der weddin'?

DEA.—No, Seline, not one. *Pauv'* papa's finished Quasimodo. I've got him in my basket. I'm to sell him for five dollars.

SELINE.—Well, honey, ef yer want ter sell him yer got ter stan' him out where people'll see him; 'taint no use ter keep him covered up in yer basket. I'm goin' ter give yer a corner of my table. (*She brushes some cakes and fruits aside and puts the image there.*)

DEA.—But the dust, Seline! Papa doesn't like them to get dusty.

SELINE.—Never mind der dust, chile; it'll blow off. It's der money we want, an' I don't see how yer goin' ter sell dat poor little crooked image. (*She looks at it contemptuously.*) But I'm goin' ter sell one of dem little images fer yer papa dis yere day, er my name ain't Seline. I ain't been right yere in dis place since en' durin' the war fer nothin'. I ain't made no fortune, but I's done made right smart, an' now I's got plenty to do a little fer you, honey, what ain't got no ma, only a *paur'* sick papa, so I's going ter help yer sell yer little images. Yer tired an' sleepy, chile; jest drap down on my little stool an' take a nap in der shade, an' I'll look out for customers. (*Dea goes to sleep behind the stand. Philip takes a position at the side and Seline comes round behind and waves a big fan over the fruit.*) Dar's dat stranger what useter pass yere right often fer flowers an' pralines. He's goin' ter buy yer little image if he comes ter day. He paints pictures up in der top of dat tall house down yere on Rue Royale, an' he's from der Norf, an' rich—rich. (*Dea sits up and looks pleased. They watch people pass them in silence.*)

MR. AINSWORTH *enters on the side nearest Philip, passes by him, then turns back and bends over tray of flowers.*

MR. AINSWORTH (*to himself*).—How fragrant! How delicious! (*He selects a bunch of flowers.*) Some pecans, please. (*He puts down a dime for the nuts. Both children watch him with wide-open eyes.*)

SELINE.—They're right fresh, M'sieur; an' won't yer have a few pralines for lagnappe?

MR. AINSWORTH.—Certainly; thank you. (*Looking at the children while Seline puts everything into a paper bag for him.*)

SELINE (*handing him the bag*).—If yer please, M'sieur, I'd like ter show yer dis yere little image. (*She shows him Quasimodo.*)

MR. AINSWORTH (*laying down flowers and bag, and taking up the figure very carefully*).—Who made this?

DEA.—My papa.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Your papa! Well, he's a genius. It is perfectly modeled. What's your papa's name, and where does he live? (*Dea drops her head and says nothing.*)

SELINE.—Her *pauv'* papa is al'ays sick. (*She touches her forehead significantly.*) He doesn't like to see no one. She would never tell strangers where she lives

MR. AINSWORTH.—Oh, I see. (*Gently to Dea.*) Well, my child, can you tell me what character this figure represents?

DEA.—It is Quasimodo.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Of course. It is perfect—perfect; but what a strange subject. (*He turns it over and over.*) Do you want to sell it?

DEA (*eagerly*).—Oh, yes, M'sieur. If you will buy it, *pauv'* papa will be so glad—he told me that I *must* sell it to-day.

MR. AINSWORTH.—How much do you ask for it?

DEA.—Papa said I could sell it for five dollars. Is five dollars too much? (*She hesitates.*) He said it was a work of art, but if you think it is too much—

MR. AINSWORTH.—It *is* a work of art. (*He draws out a five-dollar note from his pocket, but holds it.*) But tell me, if you can, how long it took your father to make this?

DEA.—Oh, a long time, M'sieur. I can't tell just how long, because he works at night when I'm asleep.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Ah! he works at night,—and do you sell many?

DEA.—No, M'sieur, I have not sold one for a long time.

PHILIP.—She hasn't sold one since Mardi Gras. A stranger bought one then, but he only gave three dollars for it.

MR. AINSWORTH (*smiling at Philip*).—Are you her brother?

PHILIP.—Oh, no, M'sieur, we are not related. She's just my friend. She's a girl, and I try to take care of her, and help her all I can.

MR. AINSWORTH (*to himself, as he turns away*).—How much he is like him,—the same look, the same smile, and about the same age. If Laura could see him, she would think her boy had come to life again. (*Turning back as if from a dream.*) What a good boy you are! She's a fortunate little girl to have such a friend. Tell me your name, please; I wish to get better acquainted with you.

PHILIP (*promptly*).—My name is Philip, M'sieur.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Philip! how strange! What is your other name?

PHILIP.—Oh, I'm always called Toinette's Philip. I never thought of any other name. I'll ask my mammy to-night if I've got another.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Is Toinette your mother?

PHILIP.—No, M'sieur, she's my mammy. She's a yellow woman, and you see I'm white.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Have you always lived with Toinette?

PHILIP.—Always, ever since I can remember.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Then you have no parents?

PHILIP.—Parents? Oh, no, I guess not. I don't know; I'll ask mammy.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Where do you live?

PHILIP.—I live on Ursulines street, away down town. Mammy has a garden and sells flowers. It's a right pretty garden. Won't you come some day to see it? Mammy's proud of her garden, and likes strangers to see it.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Thank you; certainly I will come. I like flowers myself, and I like pictures. I wonder if you like them—I mean pictures. I suppose you have not seen many.

PHILIP.—Lots of them, and I like them, too. I've seen them in the churches, and in the shop-windows—I've tried to make some.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Well, my boy, I'm a painter. I paint pictures. Would you like to come and see mine?

PHILIP.—Yes, M'sieur. I would if mammy says I may. I'll ask her, and if she'll let me, I'll come to-morrow.

MR. AINSWORTH.—I wish you could bring your little friend with you. I should like to paint a picture of her. (*Dea has been anxiously watching the note fluttering in his hand.*)

PHILIP.—Will you go with me, Dea?

DEA (*curtly*).—I can't—I must sell Esmeralda.

MR. AINSWORTH (*smiling from one to the other*).—So you have a figure of Esmeralda, and your name is Dea. Where is Homo, the wolf?

DEA.—Homo's under the table asleep, but he's not a wolf; he's only a wolf-dog.

MR. AINSWORTH (*to himself*).—Really, it is very interesting.—(*The dog comes forth.*) This child and the dog seem to have stepped out of one of Victor Hugo's books. (*He turns to Dea.*) My child, if you will come to my studio, I will pay you for your time, and I will buy some more of your little figures. I won't keep you long, and it will be better than staying in the street all day.

SELINE.—Yes, honey, so it will. Does yer understand? M'sieur'll pay yer, and yer'll have plenty money fer yer *pauv'* papa.

DEA (*hesitating*).—I'm afraid papa won't be willing. I'll ask him, but I must go home now. I must—I must go to papa.

PHILIP (*to Mr. Ainsworth*).—Dea can't promise now, but perhaps she'll come to-morrow. I'll try to bring her, M'sieur.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Thank you. I live in that tall house just below here. Ask the cobbler in the court to show you the way to Mr. Ainsworth's apartment. (*At last he hands the five-dollar note to Dea.*)

DEA (*with a look of gratitude*).—Oh, M'sieur, I'm so glad! Yes, I'll try to come; when *pauv'* papa knows how good you are, perhaps he'll let me come. And may I bring Esmeralda? Will you buy Esmeralda?

MR. AINSWORTH (*smiling*).—Yes, I'll buy Esmeralda. You'll find me a good customer, if you'll bring your figures to my studio.

DEA (*eagerly*).—I'll come—I'll come to-morrow! Now Seline, give me my basket. I must run all the way to papa.

SELINE (*soothingly, as she hands the basket*).—Don't, honey, don't get so flustered, an' don't run. It'll make yer little head ache, an' then yer can't get yer papa's dinner.

DEA.—I must—I must run, Seline. Au revoir, M'sieur. Au revoir, Philip. (*With a happy smile she runs out.*)

SELINE (*after watching Dea disappear*).—Oh, M'sieur, you've done a good deed buyin' dat little image. Pore child, she's so glad she can't wait, 'cause her papa ain't had no breakfast.

PHILIP.—Nor no supper last night. Dea don't like to tell, but I always know when they have nothing to eat.

MR. AINSWORTH (*in amazement*).—What! Is it possible? —nothing to eat! Are they as poor as that? And have they no one to take care of them?

PHILIP.—They haven't any one. They came here from France when Dea was a baby, and her father's been strange and sick ever since her mother died.

SELINE (*with a sigh*).—An' that poor chile has to take

care of him. Oh, M'sieur, do buy somethin' more fer the sake of that motherless little cretur!

MR. AINSWORTH.—I will—I certainly will. I'll try to do something for them. I'll sell some to my friends. Bring the child to me and I will see what I can do. Good day! (*He goes out.*)

PHILIP.—Good day, M'sieur.

SELINE.—Good day, M'sieur. (*They watch him depart.*)

PHILIP.—I didn't think any one who painted pictures would stop to talk to us. Why, I ain't a bit afraid of him. You can bet I'm going to see him, and I'm going to get him to teach me to paint pictures.

SELINE.—An' he's rich!—He'll buy lots of them little images.

CURTAIN.

THE SICK BOY'S PLAN.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Goodwin, *a clergyman.*

Mr. Crawson, *a fisherman, pale and hollow-eyed.*

Mr. Dodge, *a prosperous farmer.*

Jimmie Dodge, *a small boy just recovering from a serious illness.*

Mrs. Dodge, *his mother, a gentle woman.*

Servant.

Situation.—JIMMIE DODGE *was enticed by* DANIEL CRAWSON *to play truant. They quarreled over their pond lilies and* DANIEL *struck* JIMMIE *on the head with an oar. He was taken home senseless. Finally* JIMMIE *gets better,* DANIEL *reforms and* JIMMIE *plans to surprise the kind doctor.*

The scene is in the ordinary living-room of a well furnished farm-house. Young people can take all the parts with proper costumes.

Enter REV. MR. GOODWIN *followed by* MR. CRAWSON.

MR. CRAWSON (*with great emotion*).—Now I'll tell the truth though it carries my own boy to prison for life. (*He blows his nose.*) My boy, Daniel, and he (*He points to the supposed sick room at one side.*) were in my boat. They had a quarrel about some lilies they had gathered. Daniel has a hot temper, and he struck Jimmy on the head with

his oar. If he's killed him, why——(*His emotions are too much for him. He goes out.*)

MR. DODGE *enters from the other side.*

MR. GOODWIN.—Have you seen Mr. Crawson? I never saw a man so changed. I am told he has not once left home or allowed his son to step over the threshold since the sad accident. He considers himself pledged to you not to let his son escape whatever the consequences may be.

MR. DODGE (*in a kindly tone*).—I remember nothing of that. I sincerely pity him.

SERVANT *enters.*

SERVANT (*to Mr. Dodge*).—Mr. Crawson, sir, has come back again and wants to see you, sir.

MR. DODGE.—Have him come right up here.

MR. GOODWIN.—Perhaps it would be better for me to retire. He may want to speak to you alone.

MR. DODGE.—That may be so. You can step right into that room, Mr. Goodwin. (*Mr. Goodwin goes out.*)

MR. CRAWSON *enters on other side.*

MR. CRAWSON.—I can't stand it any longer. I want to know what you intend to do to my son.

MR. DODGE.—I don't understand you, neighbor.

MR. CRAWSON.—I mean in case of the worst. I know I ought not to come to you in your trouble; but I can't eat nor sleep till it's decided.

MR. DODGE.—Do you mean in regard to Daniel who struck the blow by which my son was injured?

MR. CRAWSON.—Yes.

MR. DODGE (*thoughtfully*).—Does he seem penitent?

MR. CRAWSON.—He's done little but cry ever since.

MR. DODGE (*heartily*).—Then tell him I freely forgive him, as I hope God will.

MR. CRAWSON (*staggering back*).—Do you mean to say that you sha'n't take him up,—commit him to jail for trial?

MR. DODGE.—I never thought of doing such a thing. Every day when I pray that God will give me back the life of my boy, I pray that this dreadful event may be blessed to his companion. You may tell him so. It would be in vain for us to ask God to forgive our sins, if we did not from the heart forgive each other. (*He shakes hands sympathetically with Mr. Crawson and goes out. Mr. Crawson sinks down in a chair and covers his face with his hands.*)

MR. GOODWIN *enters unobserved and puts his hands on* MR. CRAWSON'S *shoulders.*

MR. CRAWSON (*starting up and smiling*).—I believe it. I believe it. (*He seizes Mr. Goodwin's hand and shakes it.*) I always scoffed at religion. I allus said it did for Sunday use; but it wouldn't work for every day wear; but I believe it now; and Mr. Dodge has got it too. I must go home and tell my poor boy. (*He goes out.*)

MR. DODGE *returns.*

MR. GOODWIN.—I am very much pleased with what Mr. Crawson says and does.

MR. DODGE (*warmly*).—That man's heart is in the right place. Why, the doctor said——

MRS. DODGE *enters leading* JIMMIE *carefully forward.*

MR. GOODWIN (*stepping forward and putting his hand on the boy's head.*) How is Jimmie to-day?

JIMMIE.—I suppose I'm some better, but my head aches awfully yet.

MRS. DODGE.—There, dear, sit down here (*She leads him to one side where she sits in a chair and rolls up a cushioned stool for him beside her.*) and rest your head in mamma's lap. You can go to sleep if you want to.

MR. GOODWIN (*to Mr. Dodge*).—You were speaking of the doctor, Mr. Dodge.

MR. DODGE.—Yes, I was saying that Mr. Crawson, poor hard-working man that he is, went to the doctor and insisted on leaving a hundred dollars to pay for his attendance on Jimmie.

MR. GOODWIN.—I hope the doctor did not accept it.

MR. DODGE.—He did for the moment to ease Mr. Crawson's mind, but he afterward carried it back to the bank and put it to Mr. Crawson's credit again.

MR. GOODWIN.—That was right. The doctor too has his heart in the right place.

MR. DODGE.—You will think so when I tell you that he has just brought me his bill all receipted. I could not offend the good man by not accepting it; but I shall watch a chance to do him a favor.

MR. GOODWIN (*starting to go*).—Truly, the world has better people in it than we sometimes think. (*He goes out accompanied by Mr. Dodge.*)

MRS. DODGE (*looking at Jimmie, who stares up with wide-open eyes*).—Why, Jimmie, do you feel worse, darling?

JIMMIE.—No, mamma, but I've got a plan. I hope you and papa will be willing. (*She bends down and kisses him on the forehead.*) Do you think papa would sell his buggy? I heard him tell Mr. Morse it was too narrow for him, and that was the reason he bought the carryall. Now the buggy has been standing in the barn a long time, and he don't use it but once in a great while.

MRS. DODGE (*laughing and going to the door*).—Husband

come up here a minute. Here is a boy wants to know if you will sell your buggy.

MR. DODGE *enters, smiling.*

MR. DODGE.—Who wants it, Jimmie?

JIMMIE.—I do. Oh, papa, please don't laugh. I've been thinking of a plan. I don't want Mr. Crawson to take his money out of the bank for me. If I hadn't been a bad disobedient boy, I shouldn't have gone in the boat, and then Daniel couldn't have hurt me. I don't want the doctor not to have his pay because he isn't rich, and he goes to see so many poor people who can't give anything.

MR. DODGE.—But what has that to do with my buggy, my son?

JIMMIE.—I'll tell you pretty soon, papa. You know the money grandma gave me; and the bank book with my name in it that's in your desk?

MR. DODGE.—Yes, I know.

JIMMIE.—Now, papa, if you'll take the money for yours, and let me have the buggy, and get Mr. Morse to fix it up and varnish it, then I could give it to the doctor instead of his old, rattling thing.

MR. DODGE (*thoughtfully*).—That's a famous plan, Jimmie. (*He rises and walks about room.*) I thought you were going to buy a watch and gold chain, and a Phi Beta Kappa medal like the minister's, and a farm with your money in the bank.

JIMMIE.—Oh, papa! (*In shame.*) That was when I was a little boy.

MR. DODGE (*with a comical glance at his wife*).—Ah indeed, that makes a difference! (*After a short pause.*) Well, I can have the buggy-wheel mended, and the whole painted to look as well as new for twenty dollars. So if

you're inclined to make me a good offer, I think I shall take you up.

JIMMIE (*eagerly*).—Will the money I have be enough?

MR. DODGE.—Let me see. There's five hundred dollars besides the interest for four years and some little sums added. Yes, I think that will do.

JIMMIE.—Oh, papa, I'm so glad. (*He cries for joy and Mr. Dodge laughs heartily.*)

MRS. DODGE.—Hush! I wouldn't, husband. He only knows that he is very happy. Let us take him to his room now. He must not have too much excitement. (*She puts a shawl about him and Mr. Dodge carries him out.*)

MR. DODGE.—What will the doctor say? Do you think he'll know it is his? (*All go out.*)

A CHILD'S LOVE.

CHARACTERS.

Sarah, *a small girl dressed to represent Spring.*

Hannah, *another small girl representing Summer.*

Samuel, *a small boy representing Autumn.*

David, *another small boy representing Winter.*

Situation.—*This dialogue is of a religious nature. The names are of Old Testament characters. There is little or no action in the dialogue, for it is meant for very little folks. There are four sets of speeches. The first set is about the Seasons; the second set is about Animals; the third set is about the Earth and Heavens; the last set is about personal Friends. These different sets may be arranged in different ways, according to circumstances. A little group of four children may recite them all, or there may be four groups of children, or any set may be recited without the other sets.*

The arrangement of the children on the platform will depend on the platform and the number of children used. If sixteen take part, they may form a perfect square—four in front. When these four have recited, they may file to the rear or to the side of the room, and so on to the end. If only four take part, each may step to the front to recite his stanza and remain standing there until the refrain has been repeated by all.

SARAH.— I love the spring, the gentle spring;
I love its balmy air,—
I love its showers, that ever bring
To us the flow'rets fair.

ALL.— Come, let us sing, we love the spring,
We love the summer too,—
While autumn's fruit each one will suit,
To winter give his due.

HANNAH.—I love the summer's sky so bright;
I love the fragrant flowers;
I love the long, long days of light:
But more the shady bowers.

ALL.— Come, let us sing, we love the spring,
We love the summer too,—
While autumn's fruit each one will suit,
To winter give his due.

SAMUEL.— I love the autumn's clust'ring fruit,
That in the orchard lies;
I love its ever-changing suit,
Its trees of brilliant dyes.

ALL.— Come, let us sing, we love the spring,
We love the summer too,—
While autumn's fruit each one will suit,
To winter give his due.

DAVID.— I love stern winter's ice and snow;
I love his blazing fire;—
I love his winds that freshly blow,—
Yes, winter I desire.

ALL.— Come, let us sing, we love the spring,
We love the summer too,—
While autumn's fruit each one will suit,
To winter give his due.

SARAH.— I love the merry birds, that sing,
So sweet, their morning song,—
I love to see them on the wing
Speed gracefully along.

ALL.— Yes, we will love the gentle dove—
The birds that sing so sweet,
The fishes all, and insects small,
The beasts we daily meet.

HANNAH.—I love beneath the limpid wave
To see the fishes glide;
I love to watch them as they lave
So gayly in the tide.

ALL.— Yes, we will love the gentle dove,—
The birds that sing so sweet,
The fishes all, and insects small,
The beasts we daily meet.

SAMUEL.— I love each prancing, noble steed;
I love the dog, so true;
I love the gentle cow; indeed,
Without, what could we do?

ALL.— Yes, we will love the gentle dove,—
The birds that sing so sweet,
The fishes all, and insects small,
The beasts we daily meet.

DAVID.— I love the little busy bee;
I love the patient ant:
For they this lesson teach to me—
"We need not ever want."

ALL.— Yes, we will love the gentle dove,—
The birds that sing so sweet,
The fishes all, and insects small,
The beasts we daily meet.

SARAH.— I love the blue and far-off sky;
I love the beaming sun;
The moon and stars, that, up on high,
Shine bright when day is done.

ALL.— We love, on high, to see the sky;
We love the broad, blue sea;
We love the earth, that gave us birth;
We love the air, so free.

HANNAH.—I love the very air we breathe;
I love, when flow'rets bloom,
At early morn, or dewy eve,
To inhale the sweet perfume.

ALL.— We love, on high, to see the sky;
We love the broad, blue sea;
We love the earth, that gave us birth;
We love the air, so free.

SAMUEL.— I love the ocean, vast and grand;
I love to hear its roar—
I love its waves that kiss the sand,
And those that proudly soar.

ALL.— We love, on high, to see the sky;
We love the broad, blue sea;
We love the earth, that gave us birth;
We love the air, so free.

DAVID.— I love the broad and fruitful earth;
I love each hill and dale;
I love the spot that gave me birth—
My own dear native vale!

ALL.— We love, on high, to see the sky;
We love the broad, blue sea;
We love the earth, that gave us birth;
We love the air, so free.

SARAH.— I love my father, ever kind;
I love to meet his smile,—
I love to see him pleasure find
In watching me the while.

ALL.— Our friends are dear, that we have here,
But, better far than all,
There's One we love, who dwells above,
And on His name we call.

HANNAH.—I love full well my mother dear;
I love her cheering voice,—
Her gentle words I wait to hear,—
They make my heart rejoice!

ALL.— Our friends are dear, that we have here,
But better far than all,
There's One we love, who dwells above,
And on His name we call.

SAMUEL.— I love my little brother sweet;
I love his words of glee,—
I love his playful glance to meet,
His beaming smile to see.

ALL.— Our friends are dear, that we have here,
But better far than all,
There's One we love, who dwells above,
And on His name we call.

DAVID.— I love my little sister fair;
I love her rosy cheek,—
I love with her each joy to share,
Her happiness to seek.

ALL.— Our friends are dear, that we have here,
But better far than all,
There's One we love, who dwells above,
And on His name we call.

(*They all bow and file out.*)

A MANLY BOY

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Jones, *a fleshy gentleman in a linen coat,—chairman of Committee on Church Decoration.*

Mr. Follins, *another gentleman.*

Dick Stuart, *a very manly little boy of about ten or twelve years.*

A Clerk.

Situation.—DICK STUART *comes to town on a very hot day in August to secure the job of furnishing evergreens for the church at Christmas. The men in the office laugh at evergreens at Christmas, but promise him the job. His honest, fearless face wins.*

The scene is in the business office of MR. JONES. *There is a desk, a desk chair and other chairs.* MR. FOLLINS *has a newspaper. The gentlemen should be dressed for very hot weather.* DICK *is neatly but very plainly dressed.*

MR. FOLLINS *enters with a newspaper and seats himself.* MR. JONES *follows, mopping his brow.*

MR. JONES (*seating himself by the desk*).—This is terrible, terrible!—Thermometer ninety-eight in the shade. I pity the horses——

CLERK *enters smiling.*

CLERK.—A boy to see you, Mr. Jones.

Mr. JONES.—Ha! a boy is there? Well, ask him in.

Any body who ventures out in the street under such a sun ought to have important business. (*Both gentlemen look toward the door as the clerk goes out.*)

DICK *enters, taking a handkerchief from his pocket and wiping his brow.*

DICK.—I want to see Mr. Jones.

MR. FOLLINS (*waving his hand toward Mr. Jones*).—That is Mr. Jones.

DICK.—Are you the chairman of the committee to decorate St. Stevens' church?

MR. JONES (*pausing in astonishment*).—Hem! yes, I'm the one.

DICK.—Have you engaged your evergreens for Christmas, sir?

MR. JONES.—For Christmas? ha! ha! ha! we haven't begun to think of Christmas yet, my little fellow.

DICK (*in a matter-of-fact way*).—I want to get the job, if you please. I'll supply the evergreen as cheap as anybody. I know, it's a good while before Christmas; but mother says it's best to be in season when you're to do anything.

MR. JONES (*looks at Mr. Follins and laughs aloud*).—What is your name?

DICK.—Richard Monroe Stuart.

MR. JONES.—How old are you?

DICK.—Twelve last March.

Mr. JONES.—Have you ever decorated a church before?

Dick.—No, sir; and I don't expect to decorate it this year. Mother says it takes tall men with ladders, to do that. I only want to supply the evergreens, I'll do it as cheap as any body, sir.

MR. JONES.—Where do you live, Richard?

DICK.—I live in Strawfield, sir. They always call me Dick at home. (*He smiles.*)

MR. JONES.—Is your father living, Dick?

DICK.—Oh, yes, sir. He is the minister in Strawfield.

MR. JONES.—And you are doing business on your own account?

DICK.—Yes, sir. One of our neighbors has a church to decorate every year; and he makes a good deal of money.

MR. JONES.—I suppose your parents are willing you should do this; I mean that they knew of your coming here?

DICK.—Mother does, sir, of course.

MR. JONES.—Why not your father, too?

DICK.—I want to surprise him. The people are poor; and so they can't give much salary. If I get the job, I'm going to buy a new buffalo robe. We've needed one for the sleigh a good while.

MR. JONES.—Whew! will it ever be cold enough to need buffaloes? (*Dick laughs.*)

MR. FOLLINS.—I don't know what Mr. Jones will do; but if I were the chairman of the committee, you should have the job. I approve of boys who tell their mothers everything.

DICK.—Thank you, sir. There's one thing I haven't told mother yet. Last spring our hod got broken. If I make enough I want to get her a new one.

MR. JONES.—Good, my boy. I guess you'll have enough besides for the buffalo robe. If you don't, it won't be a very profitable job. Shall you gather the evergreen yourself?

DICK.—Yes, sir, in the vacation at Thanksgiving. Mother says she thinks she shall have time to help me wind it evenings; and then, I can keep it fresh down cellar. Do you think, Mr. Jones, I can get the job?

MR. JONES.—Come here the first of November, and I will tell you. Our church is feeling rather poor this year; but if we decorate at all, you shall supply the evergreens. Here is my card. Shall you remember?

DICK.—Oh, yes, sir! I should remember you, and where you live, without any card; but I'll take it if you please.

MR. FOLLINS (*drawing out his portmonnaie*).—Suppose, Dick, that I give you enough to buy a hod now. It's inconvenient to do without one.

DICK (*with pride and some indignation*).—I'm much obliged to you, sir, but I'd rather earn the money for it. Mother'd like it a great deal better. (*Turning to Mr. Jones.*) I'll be sure to be back, sir, the first of November. (*He bows and starts out.*)

MR. JONES (*holding out his hand*).—Good-by, Dick. You've got a good mother, I'm sure.

DICK (*shaking the hand*).—Yes, sir. She's the best woman in the world. (*He holds out his hand to Mr. Follins who shakes it.*) Thank you, sir. (*He goes out.*)

MR. FOLLINS.—I'd give a hundred dollars if my boy had been here to see Dick. He'll make his mark in the world. He's got the true grit.

MR. JONES.—I'd give ten thousand if I had one like him. The idea of Christmas decorations on this hot day! Ha! Ha! Ha!

MR. FOLLINS.—I must go but I should like to be here the first of November. (*He shakes hands with Mr. Jones.*)

MR. JONES.—We shall hear of Mr. Richard Monroe Stuart again; or I'm mistaken. (*Mr. Jones follows Mr. Follins out.*)

A TINY QUARREL.

CHARACTERS.

Fanny, *a girl with a doll.*

Chrissie, *a girl who dislikes dolls.*

Situation.—CHRISSIE'S *father has given her a pony for Christmas. Her aunt has told her the story of a horse with wings, named Pegasus; so she has named him Wings.* FANNY, *her cousin, comes with her doll to visit her and wants to hear the story. The little girls quarrel and* FANNY *is on the point of departing when they make up and go off to give the canary a bath.*

A sofa is at the back of the platform and FANNY *leaves her wraps on it. Near the front is a table with a work-basket on it, containing needles, thread, etc. There are chairs near by. The platform represents a sitting-room.*

Enter FANNY *with her doll, and* CHRISSIE.

CHRISSIE.—Now, you must take your things right off and I'll find you a needle and thread.

FANNY (*taking off her cloak and hood*).—Well, then, I'll stay, 'cause there isn't much more to do to the cloak, and Queen Mab must have it right away.

CHRISSIE (*she has found a needle all threaded*).—There, won't that needle and thread do?

FANNY (*coming up to the table and taking the needle*).—Yes, I guess so. Now, while I'm sewing, you tell me that fountain story.

CHRISSIE.—Oh, yes! Only think. (*She settles down in a chair.*) It was a woman once, that fountain was; but she poured her life all out into tears, crying because her son was killed. So the fountain is made of tears.

FANNY (*threading her needle*).—Bitter and salt, then.

CHRISSIE.—No, indeed; just as sweet and nice as any water. Pegasus loved it; and there was a beautiful young man, his name was Bel—Bel—well, I declare, I've forgotten,—no, 'twas Bellerophon; and he had a bridle, and wanted a horse. Oh, do you know this horse was white, with silvery wings, wild as a hawk; and once in a while, he would fold up his wings, and trot round on the mountain. (*Fanny yawns, and ties a knot in her thread.*) Oh, it was a splendid bridle, this man had, made of gold; and I forgot—the mountain the horse trotted round on was called Helicon. And the man mounted him, and went up, up, till they were nothing but specks in the sky.

FANNY.—A likely story! There, you've told enough! I don't want to hear any more such nonsense.

CHRISSIE.—Well, if you don't want to hear about the monster they killed, you needn't; that's all I can say; but the young man loved that horse; and he kissed him, too, he was so splendid.

FANNY (*looking very disgusted*).—Kiss a horse!

CHRISSIE.—Why, I've kissed my pony a great many times right between his eyes; and he almost kisses me. He wants to say, "I love you." I can see it in his eyes.

FANNY (*she has finished her doll's cloak and puts it on, and holds up the doll to be admired*).—I think her opera cloak is very bewitching, don't you, Chrissie? It's trimmed with ermine, because she is a queen, and is going to the opera.

CHRISSIE (*indifferently*).—It looks well enough, but it

isn't ermine. It's only white cat's fur, with black spots sewed on.

FANNY.—Of course it isn't real ermine, but I play that it is, and it's just as well.

CHRISSIE.—But you know all the while it's a make-believe. She hasn't any more sense than a stick of wood, either; and I don't see any sport in playing with dolls.

FANNY.—And I don't see any sense in fairy stories. Do you know what Harry says about you? He says your head is as full of airy notions as a dandelion top. I love Queen Mab as if she was my own sister. (*She is angry.*) You know I do, Chrissie. I always thought, if anything should happen to Queen Mab, and I lost her, I should certainly dress in mourning. Now, you needn't laugh.

CHRISSIE (*with a curl of her lips*).—Oh, I can't help laughing, when anybody makes such a fuss over a doll. Anything that isn't alive, and hasn't any sense, and don't care for you! I like canary birds, and babies, and ponies, and that's enough to like.

FANNY (*twitching at her doll's dress*).—Well, now, that's so funny, for the very reason I like my doll is because she *isn't* alive. I wouldn't have been you, Chrissie Redmond, when you had your last canary bird, and let him choke to death.

CHRISSIE.—Oh, no, Fanny, I didn't let him choke; I forgot to put any seed in the bottle and he stuck his head in so deep, that he smothered to death.

FANNY.—I don't know but smothering is as bad as choking, and now your new bird will be sure to come to some bad end.

CHRISSIE (*vexed*).—You're always saying hateful things. I like Jessie Thompson ten times as well, for she's a great deal more lady-like.

FANNY (*rising and going toward her wraps*).—Well, I suppose I can go home. You're such a perfect lady that I can't get along with you.

CHRISSIE (*to herself*).—Oh, dear, what does ail my tongue? (*Fanny puts on her cloak.*) Cousin Fanny, I wish you wouldn't go. I didn't mean to tell that I liked Jessie best; but it's the real honest truth, and if I should take it back, 'twould be a lie. (*Fanny puts on her hood and ties it with a twitch.*) But I like *you* ever so much, Fanny; now you know I do. You're hateful sometimes, but so am I; and I can't tell which is the hatefulest.

FANNY (*laughing merrily and throwing off her things*).—Yes, I'll stay just on purpose to plague you. (*She dances round the room.*)

CHRISSIE.—Oh, goody, what shall we do? Oh, I'll tell you. Just come out in the kitchen and see me wash my bird.

FANNY (*following with some surprise*).—Why, I thought birds washed themselves.

CHRISSIE.—They do, but Dicky won't. It's all in the world I have against Dicky. He isn't a cold-water bird.

(*They go out.*)

THE MOUSE.

Adapted from a story, " Toinette's Philip," by Mrs. C. V. Jamison.

CHARACTERS.

Madam Ainsworth, *an old lady, the head of a wealthy family in New York.*

Mr. Edward Ainsworth, *her son.*

Mrs. Laura Ainsworth, *wife to* EDWARD.

Philip Ainsworth, *a small boy, adopted son to* EDWARD *and* LAURA.

Lucille Van Norcom, *natural grand-daughter to* MADAM AINSWORTH *and heiress to the family estates.*

Mademoiselle, *a French governess to* LUCILLE, *of middle age.*

Helen, *a young maid to* LUCILLE.

Situation.—MR. *and* MRS. AINSWORTH *have seen* PHILIP *selling flowers in a street of New Orleans and have adopted him.* MADAM AINSWORTH *does not approve the choice and makes* PHILIP'S *life miserable, while she humors the fancies of* LUCILLE, *a delicate and whimsical girl, with grand manners.* PHILIP *resolves to get even with* LUCILLE. *He makes a cotton mouse and pulls it through the room where she is. She faints away. He is alarmed and confesses.* MADAM *threatens to take away his white mice, called by him Père Josef's " chickens " after the priest who gave them to him. He appeals so pathetically to her that she relents and he departs happy.*

The first scene takes place in a hall, the second in a sitting-room, the third in a study or library. Very little depends on the furniture used. A table and chairs of different kinds are used in all scenes. On the table in the first scene there is nothing; in the second scene there are books and magazines and a lady's work-basket; in the third scene there are letters and papers. These parts by proper dressing may all be taken by young people.

Scene I.

PHILIP *enters with a downcast air.*

PHILIP.—I don't see what I've done to hurt her. It's no use, she won't ever like me, and she treats me worse then she does the poodle, Fluff. (*He pulls out of his pocket a mouse made of wool with a long thread tied to it.*) I've got to get even with her, and she will be back in a little while. My, won't she be scared, but I've got to have some fun. (*He places the mouse on the floor, untangles his thread, and keeping hold of the thread retires through door on other side.*)

Enter LUCILLE, GOVERNESS *and* HELEN *the maid in street costume.*

GOVERNESS (*jumping up into a chair*).—Ah! Eh! (*She shrieks.*) *Voila!* (*She points at the mouse; all scream. Lucille climbs on a table.*)

MADAM (*without*).—What is it——what is the matter? Lucille, darling, are you hurt?

LUCILLE.—The mice, the white mice. They're in the hall, they're running all over the floor. Oh, oh, I am so afraid!

GOVERNESS (*hysterically, as she draws her skirts closer about her*).—*Les souris, les petites souris, elles sont partout!*

LUCILLE (*dancing with terror on the table*).—Where are

they? Oh, where are they? Are they running up the table legs?

GOVERNESS.—*Sont-elles sous la chaise?*

HELEN (*she has been pursuing the mouse with her umbrella in vain*).—They're gone. They ran into the butler's pantry.

MADAM AINSWORTH *rushes in.*

MADAM.—Shut the door quickly before they get out. (*She hurries to Lucille and clasps the fainting child in her arms.*)—My dear, my darling! oh, oh, you are faint.—Run and get my vinaigrette. Quick, quick! fetch some water. The poor child is unconscious. (*She carries her to the sofa, and during a pause tries to revive her.*)

BASSETT *enters with solemn, impenetrable face.*

BASSETT.—'As hanything particular 'appened, Madam?

MADAM (*excitedly*).—Why, they went into your pantry, Bassett. (*She kneels by the sofa and rubs Lucille's hands.*)

BASSETT (*rubbing his hands in a puzzled way*).—What, Madam? What went into my pantry?

MADAM.—Why, the mice. Helen saw them run in there and *you* must have seen them.

BASSETT.—I didn't see nothing in my pantry, an' I've just come from there. If you'll allow me to say it, Madam, there's some mistake.

MADAM.—What! do you mean to say that they didn't go in there—that boy's white mice, that he turned loose into the hall on purpose to frighten Miss Van Norcom?

BASSETT.—Bless me, no, Madam! Master Philip's white mice never put a foot in my pantry.

HELEN (*with a twinkle of the eye*).—I saw them, or I'm sure I saw *one*; perhaps it was the only one.

GOVERNESS.—I saw them running all over the floor.

LUCILLE (*she has recovered*).—Oh! I saw them climbing up the table legs.

BASSETT.—If you'll permit me, Madam, I'll venture to say that them little hinnocent hanimals of Master Philip's hain't never been out of their cage.

MADAM.—How dare you say such a thing, Bassett? Do you suppose that Miss Van Norcom and the others are mistaken?

BASSETT.—By no means, Madam. If I may be allowed to suggest, perhaps hit was what is called han hoptical hillusion.

MADAM.—Nonsense, Bassett! It was that troublesome boy's mischief. It is getting unendurable.

Bassett.—Will you hallow me to go to Master Philip's room, Madam? If the little hanimals are not there in their cage, I'll hadmit that they are 'id in my pantry. (*He marches out gravely.*)

MADAM.—What a shocking boy he is.—Lucille, I'm afraid you will be ill. You are so excited, so nervous. But don't fret, darling. (*To the Governess.*) He must be punished; he should not be allowed to distress Lucille in this way. We will help her to her room as soon as Bassett returns.

BASSETT *re-enters with a smile.*

BASSETT.—Hit's just as I hexpected, Madam. Them little hanimals are 'uddled hup together, sound asleep in their cage; and Master Philip is there 'ard at work a-studyin' of his Latin.

MADAM (*she gathers up Lucille, and Helen and the governess assist*).—It is certainly very strange, but I am not convinced. You can go to your pantry, Bassett. And when Miss Van Norcom is better I will investigate the matter. (*She goes out and all follow except Bassett.*)

BASSETT (*bowing low*).—Bless my 'eart, I've saved the

little pickle this time ; 'e 's safe if my young lady's young lady don't peach. She sees 'ow it is, an' she's too good to blow on the pretty little chap. I think 'e 's safe to get out of a bad scrape. (*He goes out on other side.*)

Scene II.

The curtain rises and shows PHILIP *reading a book and* MR. *and* MRS. AINSWORTH *talking as if in trouble.*

MRS. AINSWORTH.—It is absurd the way Lucille is encouraged in her silly fancies.

MR. AINSWORTH.—But it was not only Lucille, my dear. They all say they saw *something*. They could not all be mistaken. They could not all be the victims of "han hoptical hillusion," as Bassett says. Helen declares that *she* saw something, and Helen is not one to indulge in nerves.

MRS. AINSWORTH.—I don't know. I can't explain it. I only know Philip had nothing to do with it. I was in his room just before the outcry and the "children," as he calls them, were asleep in their cage, just as Bassett said. It is so unreasonable of your mother to suppose that Philip would let the mice out, and risk losing them, just to frighten Lucille.

PHILIP.—Mamma, may I go to my room? (*He rises and comes toward her.*)

MRS. AINSWORTH.—Certainly, my dear, if you wish to. You look pale. Aren't you well?

PHILIP.—I'm well, thank you, mamma; but—but I'm tired.

MRS. AINSWORTH.—Don't be unhappy, my dear, about this foolish affair. I'm sure we shall be able to convince Madam Ainsworth, when she is calmer, that *you* had nothing to do with it. (*He hesitates a moment, looks at her, kisses her warmly and goes out.*)

MR. AINSWORTH (*after a pause*).—Philip knows more about this than we think he does. I can tell by his manner that he has something on his mind.

MRS. AINSWORTH.—My dear, you are becoming strangely like your mother, with your absurd suspicions! How could the mice be asleep in their cage and running about the hall at the same time? I'm not surprised at your mother's unreasonableness. She dislikes the poor boy, and takes every means of showing it by her unkind accusations. But for *you* to suspect Philip! You who know how truthful he is!

MR. AINSWORTH (*cautiously*).—Did he *say* he knew nothing about it?

MRS. AINSWORTH.—I did not ask him. I would not hurt him so much as to have him think that I doubted his word. All he said was that the mice were not out of their cage; and I know he spoke the truth.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Well, Laura, we won't discuss it any more. But if I find that Philip is keeping anything back, I shall be greatly disappointed in him, for he's not the boy I thought he was.

MRS. AINSWORTH.—There is no reason why he should keep anything back. He is very brave, and not at all afraid to tell the truth. He is always willing to bear the consequences of his little pranks. He is never malicious—only mischievous—and where others would laugh at his harmless tricks, your mother treats them as if they were crimes. If *you* listen to your mother, she will succeed in turning *you* against the poor little fellow. Even now, I think you have changed toward him. He does not interest you as he did.

MR. AINSWORTH.—Now, my dear, *you* are unjust. I have not changed. I love Philip dearly, but I am not blind to his faults, and I do think he is a little—just a little—

malicious toward Lucille. Wouldn't it be better to speak to him gently and request him not to play any more practical jokes on that nervous, foolish child? Mother is so displeased, it will end in trouble between us if it goes on, and you must see how unpleasant that would be.

MRS. AINSWORTH (*rising and pacing to and fro*).—I am not disposed to make mountains out of mole-hills. The only thing for us to do is to take the boy away as soon as possible. We can never be happy here with him; your mother's dislike to him is unaccountable. (*She starts out.*)

MR. AINSWORTH.—Don't excite yourself, Laura. As soon as we hear that the priest is back we will start for New Orleans, and we may learn something from him about the boy that will relieve us of all responsibility. (*She goes out.*) Poor woman! She is changed! Why, the boy fascinated me the first time I saw him selling flowers in the street in New Orleans. Even after I had him dressed up and took him to our rooms, she was only half interested in him. And now she thinks I am changed toward him!—Well, well, we must go back to New Orleans and see if the old priest knows anything about his parents. The boy seems eager to return, too. To-morrow or next week at the farthest!—Ah! I have other matters to attend to! (*He goes out.*)

Scene III.

Private room of MADAM AINSWORTH. MADAM AINSWORTH *enters and sits at her desk opening letters. There is a knock on the door. She rises and opens it. In surprise, she steps back a little.*

PHILIP (*still outside*).—If you please, madam, may I come in? I want to tell you something.

MADAM (*coldly*).—Certainly, come in. I am very busy

this morning, but I will listen to what you have to say. (*She sits again at her desk and opens letters.*)

PHILIP *enters and stands near by.*

PHILIP.—I want to tell you about yesterday. It wouldn't be right not to tell you. I would have told last night, only for Mr. Butler. I don't want you to blame him. He wasn't to blame, he didn't know about it. I hid behind his pantry-door, when he was out. He didn't even help me make *it;* he never saw it. You won't blame him, will you? (*He looks imploringly at her.*)

MADAM (*sarcastically*).—Oh, Bassett was not an accomplice, then?

PHILIP.—He didn't know until after it was done. But he said he would stand by me. I don't mind for myself. You can punish me *good*. But poor Mr. Butler Bassett—I like him, and I don't want him punished.

MADAM.—Oh, I see, you are great friends. Well, go on with your interesting developments. I don't in the least understand what contemptible tricks you were up to.

PHILIP.—Why, you see, Lucille was so cross to me that I wanted—I wanted to pay her off. I wanted to frighten her. But I didn't want to make her ill. I wouldn't hurt her for the world. I wouldn't hurt any girl, even if she did—even if she did *curl her lip at me*. So I just thought it would be fun to make something like a mouse run across the floor.

MADAM (*triumphantly*).—Then there was something!

PHILIP.—Yes, there was. They did see something; but it wasn't one of the "children."

MADAM.—What was it?

PHILIP.—Why, it was a mouse, but not a live mouse. I made it out of wool, and put on a little tail of tape, and

the two eyes were jet beads off of Mademoiselle's fringe. I tied a long black thread to it, and put it in the hall just where Lucille would see it when she came in; and I made it jump quickly by jerking the thread; and when I had frightened them well, I pulled it into the pantry. Helen tried to kill it with the umbrella; but she couldn't get a lick at it. Then Lucille fainted, and Mr. Butler came in and told me to run up the back stairs. So you see that was why I said it wasn't one of the "children." (*He draws a long breath.*)

MADAM (*angrily*).—Really, really! What—what deception!—what falsehood! And my son has boasted of the boy's truthfulness!

PHILIP (*proudly*).—It wasn't a falsehood. I never tell lies. It was only a—a mistake. It was because I went in Mr. Butler's pantry, and I didn't want him blamed. That's why I didn't tell at first. I'm very sorry now that I did it. I'm very sorry that it made Lucille ill. And I came to ask you to forgive me.

MADAM (*indignantly*).—Forgive you! Indeed, I shall do nothing of the kind. I shall insist on your being punished severely. You must be taught that you can't trifle in this way with me.

PHILIP (*bravely*).—Well, I don't mind. You can punish me. Only please don't blame Mr. Butler.

MADAM.—I shall settle with Bassett at my leisure. And I shall order him to take those nasty little vermin out of the house immediately.

PHILIP (*horrified*).—What vermin? You don't mean Père Josef 's "children," do you? They're not vermin. They're just as good and quiet—and they're neat too! I keep their cage as clean as can be. Oh, you don't mean that they must go?

MADAM (*with a cold, matter-of-fact tone and manner, she turns to her desk*).—I certainly do. I have had enough trouble since you brought the horrid little things here. I shall give the order to have them taken away at once. I don't care what becomes of them.

PHILIP (*advancing and laying his hand on her arm*).—Oh, Madam, *please* don't send them away. I can't let them go. Père Josef left them in my care. Oh, please, please, don't!

MADAM.—It is no use to make a fuss. I will not allow them to stay in my house; that is final. Now you may go. I am too busy to be troubled with such nonsense. (*She shakes off the little hand.*)

PHILIP (*overcome by sorrow, he clasps his hands and makes a pathetic appeal.*)—They're so little! They don't know any one but me. They'll be afraid of strangers. They may starve, they may get lost, and they can't find their way home, and what will Père Josef say when he sees me if I don't bring his "children" back? I promised to take care of them, and I can't if you send them away. I love them, so; they are so little and cunning and they love me. They're all I've got to care for. Don't send them away, please don't! (*She rises and looks at him.*) We're going home soon. Please let them stay with me till we go! Oh, please do, and I'll be so grateful. I'll try to be good; I won't tease Lucille again. I'll be so glad if you'll let them stay.

MADAM (*she turns away an instant to get control of herself*).—There, there, child!—that will do. Don't go on as if you were insane. If your heart is so set on those horrid little creatures, keep them, and oblige me by never speaking of them again. Now wipe your eyes and go to your room, and in the future try to treat Lucille properly.

PHILIP (*smiling rapturously*).—Oh, thank you, thank

you! I'll never forget how good you are, and you won't blame Mr. Butler, will you?

MADAM.—I'll consider it. He deserves to be reproved, but for your sake I may overlook his fault. (*He hurries out.*) It is certainly very strange. (*She has followed him with her eyes till he has gone.*) The boy quite unnerved me. I really felt for a moment as though he belonged to *me*. (*She goes out on other side.*)

NELL'S CHRISTMAS STOCKING.

CHARACTERS.

Nell, *a little girl, five or six years old, of happy trustful face.*

Huldah, *an older girl, of a thoughtful face.*

Louis, *a manly courageous boy, a little older than* HULDAH.

Cap, *the leader of a group of cowboys.*

Jim, Dick, *two other cowboys.*

Mrs. Jones, *a benevolent lady of middle age.*

Situation.—*The three children after the death of father and mother, have crossed the prairie in a covered wagon. They have now just stopped for the night on the outskirts of a town. It is Christmas Eve and all are thinking of the parents that are gone. The older children go to the village to buy presents for* NELL. *While they are away the cowboys ride up, take in the situation and depart. Later on, one of them fills the stockings to overflowing. The children are delighted the next day, and* MRS. JONES *invites them all to her home in the village where they afterwards live in comfort and happiness.*

The children should be dressed in worn clothes, but with some neatness. The cowboys should be in very négligé and picturesque costume, with a pistol and knife at the belt, and slouch hats.

The platform should look like an open prairie with the rear of the wagon just showing in the corner. There is needed only enough of the wagon to pin the stockings to and to form the flaps through which NELL *pokes her head to speak to* CAP. *Of course there would be no chairs,—but only a stool or two. On one side is a fire with a kettle suspended over it on three sticks.*

Scene I.

LOUIS, HULDAH *and* NELL *enter, apparently from the other side of the wagon.*

NELL.—Say, Louie.

LOUIS.—Well.

NELL.—Is to-morrow Christmas?

LOUIS.—Yes.

NELL (*she jumps up and down*).—Oh, goody! (*Louis and Huldah turn away in sorrow.*) We'll have another tree, won't we, Louie?

LOUIS.—I—I—I'm afraid not.

NELL.—Nor nothing in my stocking?

LOUIS (*feeling in his pockets and brightening up*).—Yes, yes, little one. You shall have *something* in your stocking, anyhow.

NELL.—Can't we have even a little teenty—tonty tree?

LOUIS.—I'll see, dear.

NELL.—Ain't there any old Mr. Santa Claus in this country?

LOUIS.—I guess so.

NELL.—Well, you must send him a letter soon as we get to that town, and tell him I want a tree, a *big* tree, with forty thousand bushels of things on it, and I shall go right to work now and pray real hard for what I want most. What shall I pray for for you, Louie?

LOUIS.—Oh, nothing.

NELL.—What, not even some merlasses candy?

LOUIS.—Oh yes, I'd like that.

NELL.—Well, I'll ask for that for you, and for a *lovely* blue silk dress and a perlanno to make music on for Huldah. (*Louis and Huldah advance apart to the front of the platform while Nell in the rear quietly takes off her stockings and pins them upon the outside of the wagon cover.*)

LOUIS (*to Huldah apart*).—We ain't got but forty cents in the world, Huldah, but I'd rather spend it all than have her get up in the morning and find them stockings empty.

HULDAH (*promptly*).—So would I. I couldn't bear to have her find nothing at all in them.

LOUIS.—I reckon she'd sleep sound enough and not waken if you and I went up into the town and bought her something for her stockings.

HULDAH.—Oh, yes; she never opens her eyes after she once gets to sleep, and there's no danger of her coming to harm here.

NELL (*she has just fastened her stockings up on the wagon cover*).—There now, it won't be the leastest bit of trouble for Santy Claus to stop here on his way to the town, and he can fill my stockings without even getting out of his sleigh. (*She climbs into the wagon.*)

HULDAH (*poking her head under the flaps of wagon cover*).—Now go to sleep, Nellie, as quick as you can and then Louis and I will see if we can find Santa Claus. (*To Louis.*) She is pretty tired and will drop to sleep very quickly. She will be asleep before we can get to town now. (*After a pause as they are gathering their cooking kettles.*) I wish we could have a home somewhere, Louis.

LOUIS.—We will, sometime. I want to get back east to the places I've heard mother and father talk about.

HULDAH.—Yes, you said that when we first started ever

so long ago but do you think the horse will pull us so far?

LOUIS.—I don't know, but pretty soon we will get to a town where I can find work and we'll stop there till spring. Perhaps you and Nell can go to school a few months.

HULDAH (*cheerfully*).—We'll get along some way, I reckon. Come, let's be off. (*They go out.*)

After some noise outside, enter cautiously three cowboys, CAP, JIM, *and* DICK.

CAP.—That'd be a gay old rig to ride up an' down Fifth Avenoo in, wouldn't it?

JIM.—It's seen mighty tough times, that's sure. Wonder where the owner of such an elegant outfit is? If he ain't careful somebody 'll steal it. It ain't safe to let valuables lie round loose in this country for—well, I'll be everlastingly ding-fiddled—look there! (*He points with his whip at the stockings.*) If some youngster ain't hung up its stockings for Christmas! (*Cap and Dick approach nearer.*)

CAP (*catching hold of the stockings*).—Well, old Santa Claus ain't filled it yet and I don't reckon—hello! (*He starts back in surprise as Nell pushes her head through the flaps at the rear of the wagon.*)

NELL.—Are you Mister Santa Claus? (*All three men laugh.*)

DICK.—She caught you that time, Cap.

CAP (*to Nell*).—Well, who be *you* anyhow?

NELL.—I'm Helen May Hayden.

CAP.—Oh, you be, be you? Where's all your folks?

NELL.—I ain't got none, only just Louie and Huldah, and I s'pose they've gone off to hunt Santa Claus. Do you s'pose they'll find him?

CAP.—It's hard telling whether they will or not. What if they don't?

NELL (*puckering up face to cry*).—Then I s'pose my stockings 'll be empty in the morning, and they ain't never been empty a Christmas yet.

CAP.—Where 'd you come from, anyhow?

NELL (*thrusting out one arm*).—From the mountains way off yonder.

CAP.—And your dad didn't come with you?

NELL.—He couldn't—he's dead.

CAP.—Nor your marm?

NELL.—She's dead too.

CAP.—And there ain't nobody in the cart with you?

NELL.—No, ma'am—nobody.

CAP.—Who's Louie and Huldah?

NELL.—My brother and sister—and they're splendid. They'll find Santy Claus. Louie's got forty cents for him. I heard him tell Sis so.

CAP.—Oh, he has? Well I guess you'd better crawl back there and snuggle down among the bed-clothes till they come back. That's what you'd better do. Good night.

NELL.—Good night, mister. If you see Santy Claus you'll tell him 'bout my stockings? I wish you a Merry Christmas. (*She withdraws into the cart and they go off.*)

CAP.—Oh, yes. Good night, and sleep tight.

NELL.—Good night.

LOUIS *and* HULDAH *return quietly and put an orange in one stocking, and a toy lamb and a small bag of candy in the other.*

LOUIS.—I wish I could have got the big doll. How her eyes would have sparkled!

HULDAH.—And I know she'd 'most go crazy over that set of little dishes if she'd got 'em.

LOUIS.—Well, well, perhaps another time. (*They go out round the cart.*)

CAP *enters very stealthily with his arms full of bundles. He puts a fine doll, a purse of money and some dishes in the stockings, and ties some bundles to the cart.*

CAP (*after he has disposed of his bundles he stands off and looks at them an instant*).—Ah! if she hadn't died—and the child—its name was Nell too—a different fellow I'd have been. Perhaps I'd be settled down now in this very town, instead of scampering over the prairie like a wild cat. Well, it is not to be, an' I s'pose there's an end of it but—(*He goes off.*)

Scene II.

The next morning early, LOUIS *comes round the wagon.*

LOUIS (*in wild excitement*).—Huldah! Come here! come here quick! Look at that.

HULDAH *enters hastily.*

HULDAH.—Why the very doll! Who could have done it all? Where did they come from?

NELL *enters cheerily.*

NELL.—You did find Santa Claus, didn't you? I told him you'd find him.

LOUIS.—Told who?

NELL.—Oh, a real nice man. He came just after you'd gone. I thought he was Santy Claus and so I looked out and asked him and they all laughed.

HULDAH.—Who laughed, child? Were there more than one?

NELL.—Oh, yes, there were three of 'em; and one came up to the wagon and felt of the stockings and the others stood over there (*she points to where they stood.*) and kept laughing. I didn't like them.

HULDAH.—What did they say to you?

NELL.—They didn't say anything to me. He talked to me. He was real nice.

LOUIS.—Well, what did he say?

NELL.—He wanted to know where my father and my mother was and who you were—and I told him.

HULDAH.—And then?

NELL (*she has been untying the dishes*).—Oh! Oh! Oh! (*She dances with delight.*) What pretty dishes! Can't we all eat out of 'em to-day? This is Christmas, you know.

HULDAH.—Yes, I guess so.

LOUIS.—But, Nell, did you tell us all the men did?

MRS. JONES *enters.*

HULDAH (*to Louis*).—Oh, here is the lady we saw at the church. (*To Mrs. Jones.*) Good morning, ma'am.

MRS. JONES.—Good morning, children. Is this where you live? (*She looks about her.*) What a hard time you have had!

LOUIS.—Oh, not so awful bad, ma'am. We've managed to get along. If I could only get a job somewhere, we'd all stay and work.

MRS. JONES.—Well, now, this is Christmas and let's not worry about anything at all. Would you all like to come to my home and eat your Christmas dinner? Would this little girl? (*She holds out her hand to Nell.*)

NELL.—Yes'm, if Louie and Huldah are going. Can I take my doll?

MRS. JONES.—Certainly, of course. Why, this is a very pretty new doll.

NELL.—Yes, Santa Claus brought it.

HULDAH.—Mrs. Jones, do we look respectable enough to go to your house to dinner?

MRS. JONES.—Oh, yes, indeed.

LOUIS.—Well, then we'll come. (*To Nell.*) Show Mrs. Jones your other presents, Nellie.

NELL.—Oh, yes, come this way, Mrs. Jones. (*She leads her out.*)

HULDAH.—She is a very kind lady, Louis, and perhaps she will help us get work.

LOUIS.—I think perhaps we are through with our journey in this old wagon. The poor old horse has done his work.

Huldah.—We'll miss him, won't we? But I hope we can all live together, whatever we do. (*They go out.*)

FATHER TIME'S GRANDDAUGHTERS.

CHARACTERS.

Old Year, *a maiden in torn and stained garments and worn-out shoes.*

New Year, *a younger maiden, in light, airy, fresh costume, with bright ribbons, etc.*

Father Time, *a youth, dressed as an old man, wrinkled and bent with age, with a long white beard.*

Watchman, *another youth, dressed in working clothes.*

Situation.—*A little before midnight,* OLD YEAR *gathers her possessions together to depart from the town. While she waits on the steps of the town or city hall, she is joined by* NEW YEAR, *her sister. With great affection they greet each other and converse together, until just as the bell strikes midnight* FATHER TIME *appears and ushers off* OLD YEAR *to join the sisters who have preceded her. Then* NEW YEAR, *too, departs about her own new duties.*

OLD YEAR *carries in one hand a capacious handbox, from which protrude all manner of things, and under her arm an immense folio, like the annual volume of a newspaper.* NEW YEAR *carries only a small and pretty basket on her arm.* FATHER TIME *is dressed like a farmer and carries a sickle. The* WATCHMAN *has at*

his belt a bunch of keys and carries a lantern in his hand.

The dialogue takes place on the steps of the town hall, in the light of the full moon. Have the steps arranged at the side of the platform.

Enter OLD YEAR, *slowly and wearily. She approaches the steps and sinks down upon them. After resting a moment she places her bandbox carefully in full view at one side; then she draws the great folio out from under her arm and opens it upon her knees to look it over again.*

Enter NEW YEAR, *gayly.*

NEW YEAR (*after greeting Old Year cordially*).—Well, my dear sister, you look almost tired to death. What have you been about during your short stay here?

OLD YEAR (*disconsolately*).—Oh, I have it all recorded here in my Book of Chronicles. There is nothing that would amuse you; and you will soon get sufficient knowledge of such matters from your own personal experience. It is tiresome reading. (*She turns over the leaves of the folio.*)

NEW YEAR.—What have you been doing in the political way?

OLD YEAR.—Why, my course here in the United States though perhaps I ought to blush at the confession,—my political course has been full of changes, sometimes for the party in power and sometimes against it. Historians will hardly know what to make of me in this respect. But the Democrats——

NEW YEAR.—I do not like these partisan remarks. We shall part in better humor if we avoid all political discussion.

OLD YEAR (*with a sigh of relief*).—With all my heart. I have already been tormented half to death with squabbles

of this kind. I care not if no whisper of these matters ever reaches my ears again. Yet they have occupied my attention so much of the time that I scarcely know what else to tell you.

New Year.—Have all the contentions been between political parties?

Old Year.—No. In other ways blood has streamed in the name of Liberty and of Patriotism; but it must remain for some future, some far-distant Year to tell whether or no those holy names have been rightfully invoked.

New Year (*hopefully*).—Have energies been wasted, or have life and happiness really been thrown away?

Old Year.—Well, who can tell? The ends often appear unwise and still oftener remain unaccomplished. But the wisest people and the best keep a steadfast faith in the upward and onward progress of mankind, and they hold that the toil and anguish of the path serve to wear away the imperfections of the Immortal Pilgrim, and will be felt no more when they have served their purpose.

New Year (*exultingly*).—Perhaps I shall see that happy day!

Old Year (*smiling gravely*).—I doubt it. You will soon grow weary of looking for it and will turn for amusement (as I have often turned) to the affairs of some sober little city like this.

New Year (*caressing her*).—Why do you speak so?

Old Year (*ironically*).—Oh, it would make you laugh to see how the game of politics is here played in miniature. The Capitol at Washington is the great chess-board, but even here burning Ambition finds its fuel; here (*exaggerated gesture.*) Patriotism speaks boldly in the people's behalf and virtuous Economy demands retrenchment in the emoluments of a lamplighter.

NEW YEAR.—Do you suppose I will talk like that in a year from now?

OLD YEAR.—Yes, yes. You may talk much worse. You will know more of human weakness and strength, passion and policy; for you can study them here almost as well as at the nation's centre. And there is this advantage that, be the lesson ever so disastrous, its tiny scope still makes the beholder smile.

NEW YEAR (*she puts her hand over her sister's mouth for an instant*).—Stop! stop! stop! Tell me what you have done to improve the city? From what I have seen it looks old and worn.

OLD YEAR (*reflecting and turning over more pages of the big folio*).*—Ah, yes! the street railways have been run by electricity for many a day, but the strangers that come here are more and more numerous because you see that they can depart more readily. There is a perceptible increase of oyster shops and other such establishments. But a more important change awaits this venerable town. An immense number of musty prejudices will be carried off by the free circulation of society. But (*She coughs.*) my breath is almost gone. (*She closes the big book.*) I must be going. (*She rises with the big book under her arm and seizes her bandbox.*)

NEW YEAR (*detaining her*).—Wait, sister, a moment more. Tell me what is in that great bandbox.

OLD YEAR (*she puts down book and opens bandbox*).—These are merely a few trifles which I have picked up in my rambles. I am going to deposit them in the receptacle of things past and forgotten. We sisterhood of Years never carry anything really valuable out of the world with us.

* Many local items may be inserted in this speech and in the other historical speeches of the Old Year.

Here (*She pulls out a bundle.*) are patterns of most of the fashions which I brought into vogue. You will supply their place with others. Here, put up in little china pots (*She produces a small pot.*) like rouge is a considerable lot of beautiful women's bloom; the disconsolate fair ones owe me a bitter grudge for stealing it.

New Year.—Of course they owe you a grudge.

Old Year.—I have likewise a quantity of men's dark hair. I have left gray locks instead, or none at all. The tears of widows and others who have received comfort during the last twelve months are preserved (*She brings out an essence bottle.*) in some dozens of essence bottles, well corked and sealed. I have several bundles of love-letters, eloquently breathing an eternity of burning passion which grew cold almost before the ink was dry. Moreover here is an assortment of many thousand broken promises and other broken ware, all very light and packed into little space. The heaviest article is a large parcel of disappointed hopes; a little while ago they were buoyant enough to inflate a balloon.

New Year.—I have a fine lot of hopes here in my basket. They are a sweet-smelling flower—a kind of rose.

Old Year (*discouragingly*).—They soon lose their perfume. What else have you brought to insure a welcome from these discontented mortals?

New Year (*with a smile of hesitation*).—Why, to tell the truth, little or nothing else, sister, except a few new Annuals and Almanacs, and some New Year's gifts for the children. But I heartily wish well to poor mortals, and mean to do all I can for their improvement and happiness.

Old Year (*shaking her head*).—That is a good resolution, and by the way (*She turns to her handbox.*) I have a plentiful assortment of good resolutions, which have grown

so stale and musty that I am ashamed to carry them farther. Only for fear that the constable would arrest me, I should toss them into the street at once. There are many other things in my bandbox, but the whole lot would not fetch a simple bid, even at an auction of worn-out furniture; and as they are worth nothing either to you or anybody else, I will not trouble you with a longer list of them.

NEW YEAR.—And must I also pick up such worthless luggage in my travels?

OLD YEAR.—Most certainly, and consider yourself fortunate if you have no heavier load to bear. And now, my

Enter slowly FATHER TIME. *He remains in the rear for a moment.*

dear sister, I must bid you farewell.

TIME (*slowly and solemnly*).—Come, come, granddaughter, your sisters are waiting for you to join them. There remains only a brief moment for me to offer your younger sister my customary advice as she enters on her new duties. (*He turns to New Year.*) Expect no gratitude nor good-will from this peevish, unreasonable, inconsiderate, ill-intending, and worse behaving generation. However warmly people may seem to welcome you, they will still be complaining, still craving what is not in your power to give, still looking forward to some other Year for the accomplishment of projects which ought never to have been formed, and which if successful would only provide new occasions of discontent. If these ridiculous people ever see anything tolerable in you, it will be after you are gone forever.

NEW YEAR.—But shall I not try to leave men wiser than I find them? I will offer them freely whatever good gifts Providence permits me to distribute, and will tell them to be thankful for what they have, and humbly hopeful for

more. And surely, if they are not absolute fools, they will be happy, and will allow me to be a happy Year. For my happiness must depend on them. (*She sits down on the steps.*)

OLD YEAR (*sighing*).—Alas, for you, then, my poor sister! (*She gathers up her burden.*) We, grandchildren of Time, are born to trouble.

TIME.—Happiness, my children, dwells in the mansions of Eternity. We can only lead mortals thither, step by step, with reluctant murmurings, and ourselves must perish on the threshold. (*The bell begins to strike the hour of midnight.*) But hark! (*Turning to Old Year.*) Come away with me. Thy task is done. (*They go out.*)

NEW YEAR (*she rises*).—Now, my task begins. Ah! here comes the watchman.

Enter WATCHMAN *from opposite side.*

WATCHMAN (*looking at her curiously*).—A happy New Year!

NEW YEAR.—Thank you kindly, sir! (*She picks a rose from her basket and gives it to him.*) May this flower keep a sweet smell, long after I have bidden you good-by! (*She trips gayly out of the door through which Watchman entered.*)

WATCHMAN (*standing a moment and looking after her, then putting the flower to his nose.*)—It smells sweet enough now! (*He smells it again and goes out on the side opposite to his entrance.*)

INTERMEDIATE DIALOGUES AND PLAYS

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

CHARACTERS.

Timothy Tullyhorn, Dr. Pellet, *members of the School Committee.*

Samuel Simpson, (*alias* WINTHROP GETCHELL PEABODY), *schoolmaster.*

Situation.—*This scene takes place in an ordinary room or parlor, fitted with chairs, tables, pens, paper and ink. The furniture should be arranged for a hearing of candidates,* DR. PELLET *on one side of room by a table,* TULLYHORN *near centre, and the schoolmaster on the other side.* SIMPSON *should come in opposite* DR. PELLET.

Enter SAMUEL SIMPSON, *a well-dressed young man, with cane and carpet-bag.*

SIMPSON.—Well, here I am! No more college studies for three months. Old Dartmouth left behind for the season, and a fine prospect of a pleasant winter teaching school in this village, and boarding, I suppose, at old Tullyhorn's, my father's friend; curious old fellow, rough, but likes a good joke; is "well-off," as they say here, and has a daughter who will divide my attention with the school. On the whole an agreeable prospect for the winter. Only I should have been here two days ago to have met the committee, and now it's Saturday. A joke, if my sore throat has cost me the school! But what's this? (*Sees a written*

notice on the door and reads it aloud.) "The school committee will meet in this room on Saturday afternoon at three o'clock to examine candidates for teaching the school in District No. 5." Well, well, (*Consults his watch.*) here it is half-past two and more, and they are to meet in this old tavern-parlor. (*Meditates.*) Don't understand it!—Yes, I do; old "Tully" is afraid I won't come, and this notice is to catch somebody else. I'll play a joke on him. (*Looks out of the window*), and pretty quick, too, for I see him coming. (*He goes out.*)

Enter TULLYHORN *and* PELLET, *both in an anxious state of mind, and sit down by the table.*

TULLYHORN.—Singular! I say, doctor, never knew the young man to fail before; always prompt, like his father; he has made many an appointment to come to my house and never was behind an hour. It's strange! and school *must* begin on Monday. (*Walks about.*)

PELLET.—Some one may turn up by three o'clock, and if so, we'll examine him, and may be find a teacher just as good as this Sim Sampson.

TULLYHORN.—*Samuel Simpson.*

PELLET.—Well, Sam Simpson, then; whatever his name is don't matter, unless he puts in an appearance. (*Glances out of the window.*) But there's a queer-looking man coming into the yard; perhaps—but it can't be! Well, I wish——

Enter SAMUEL SIMPSON, *disguised in a slouch hat, long loose overcoat, large overshoes, and with an old faded umbrella. He walks up and down in a very awkward manner, and looks about with staring eyes.*

TULLYHORN (*aside to Pellet*).—What do you make of him, doctor?

PELLET.—A candidate, I guess.

TULLYHORN.—But *he* won't do. Just look at him! But I say, doctor, we'll have some fun out of him, if we can keep our faces straight. (*He speaks loudly to Simpson.*)—Good day, sir.

SIMPSON (*turns quick about and seizes Tullyhorn's hand*).—Good day, yourself, too! And I ain't well neither; bad cold, sore throat, headache, and sick! bother it!

PELLET.—Be seated, sir. (*Offers a chair.*) Take a chair.

SIMPSON.—No, thank *you;* they allers larn folks down our way to stan' up afore their betters. Be you the school committee men?

PELLET.—Yes, sir; we have that honor.

SIMPSON.—*Honor,* do you call it? I guess as how I remember the old copy-book, "Honor and fame from low perdition rise." D'ye 'member it, I say—*you!* (*Punches Tullyhorn in the ribs with his umbrella.*)

TULLYHORN (*sharply*).—Your umbrella is as much out of place as your quotation. We are members of the school committee.

SIMPSON.—I's only a-joking with this 'ere p'int of my 'breller; it's a way I have. Well, I come to be zamined.

PELLET.—Very well, sir; what might your name be?

SIMPSON.—It *might* be Balaam, but 'taint; but if you're sot on knowing, they call me, down our way, Winthrop Getchell Peabody.

TULLYHORN.—What is your place of residence?

SIMPSON.—My *what,* sir?

TULLYHORN.—I merely wish to know where you *live.*

SIMPSON.—Why didn't you say so, if that's what you want to know? I suppose I can tell you. You've heern tell of Poplin Dracut, I s'pose.

TULLYHORN. } Oh, yes, sir.
PELLET. }

SIMPSON.—Little joke, you see! Wall, 'taint there; but it's down to *Hull*, when I'm to hum.

PELLET (*tries to suppress laughter*).—Mr. Getchell, how would you govern a school? In these days of progress and reform the mind of the community has undergone a radical change in regard to the discipline of common schools, and we consider the faculty of government as one of the most important qualifications of a teacher.

SIMPSON.—Wal, 'tis. I govern a school by mortal influence. There's always some who don't care nothing for nobody nor nothing, and who don't care whether they larn nothing or not; and *sich* ones you can't get along with without licking on 'em *some*. I've never kept school afore, and I s'pose you'd like to know how I come to, *this* time. Wall, I'll tell you. I went down to Aunt Sal's house, t'other day; and Aunt Sal's got two *prime* pretty darters; and the way them gals put into me about my *larnin'* and all that, and how I ort to keep school, and all that, was a caution. So I thort I'd come up and get zamined, and get a stifercate and then I shouldn't be skeered at any on 'em. Aunt Sal's oldest darter, Betsey, is goin' to be married in the spring; she's got all her fixin's ready, and got a likely feller, too; and he's got his house built and his shed all shingled; and I shouldn't think strange if I should stood up at the weddin' with——

TULLYHORN.—Well, never mind, sir, about Aunt Sally's domestic arrangements; they have nothing to do with the examination; please to inform us to what studies you have attended.

SIMPSON.—I've studied almost everything. I've studied grammar, *ge*-ometry, *ge*-ography, 'rithmetic, Sam Watts's

hymns, and Molly Brown's *ge*-ography, bolosophy, and a good many other books I hain't never seen yet. Besides all that, I am complete master of the Latin language. I will give you a specimen : "Amo ridiculi ridiculo potatus sum "——

PELLET.—That'll do, sir. Will you inform us what *philosophy* is?

SIMPSON.—The heavenly bodies is philosophy, and the airthly bodies is philosophy ; and if there's a screw loose in the heavenly bodies, that's philosophy ; and if there's a a screw loose in the airthly bodies, that's philosophy. There's a good many kinds of philosophy.

TULLYHORN.—Very good, sir. What is gravitation?

SIMPSON.—It's what makes things *come down*.

TULLYHORN.—Who discovered gravitation?

SIMPSON.—Old Isaiah Newton down here. *You* know him. He was walking along under an apple-tree, one day, and a *tater* fell down and hit him on the head, and that set him to thinking. Guess 'twould a sot *me* to thinking !

PELLET.—Your knowledge of philosophy appears to be very good and extensive ; therefore we will examine you no more in that branch. What's *arithmetic*, Mr. Peabody?

SIMPSON.—Why, it's a book. Should think anybody might know that !

PELLET.—Into how many parts is arithmetic divided? Or, in other words, what are the four fundamental rules?

SIMPSON.—'Rithmetic is divided into four parts : adoption, distraction, monopolization, and diversion.

TULLYHORN.—What is addition?

SIMPSON.—If I should give you ten dollars, that would be addition ; and if you should give me ten dollars, that would be addition *i' other end up*.

PELLET.—What is subtraction?

SIMPSON.—Substraction—straction, distraction! Oh, it's when a feller's raging mad. Almost had me there!

PELLET.—Yes, sir. What is vulgar fractions?

SIMPSON.—Guess that wan't in my book. Let—me—see; vulgar means immodest—don't it?—and fractions means all shattered to pieces. Oh, I know now; it means when an *immodest man is shattered to pieces*.

PELLET.—What is the first thing you would do if asked to calculate an eclipse?

SIMPSON.—I'd *decline*, and that mighty sudden!

TULLYHORN.—You will now please to give your attention to grammar, as we consider that as among the most important studies, and one that has been very much neglected in our common schools. What is grammar?

SIMPSON.—It's the science as what tells boys and girls how to write letters to each other, and talk pretty talk.

TULLYHORN.—Will you name the principal parts?

SIMPSON.—Or-tho-graphy, et-y-mology, swinetax and prorosody.

PELLET.—We will now parse a few words, for the purpose of seeing whether you fully understand this branch of education. In the sentence, "And the minister said to him," parse *minister*.

SIMPSON.—Minister is a conjunction.

PELLET.—What reason can you give for that, sir?

SIMPSON.—'Cause it jines together.

PELLET.—What does it connect?

SIMPSON.—Man and woman. Should think any fool might know that!

TULLYHORN.—In the sentence, "Shall all the rest sit lingering here?" etc.—parse *shall*.

SIMPSON.—Shell's a noun, a common noun, 'cause there's

a good many kinds of shells, such as oyster shells, snail-shells, chestnut shells, and such like; third future tense, indelible mode, nomination case to *thou* or *you* understood, according to Rule IX: Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another.

PELLET.—My friend and myself would like to have you spell a few words.

SIMPSON.—I know all about spells: cold spells, spells of weather, wet spells, and——

PELLET.—No matter about those. Can you spell Jacob?

SIMPSON.—I guess! J-a-k-u-p, Jacob. But they do say a leader of the choir up to our meeting got stuck with more music than he had words, and so he called it Ja—fol-de-riddle—cob.

TULLYHORN.—What did you say your full name was?

SIMPSON.—Winthrop Getchell Peabody.

TULLYHORN.—Please spell it, for it sounds unusual to us.

SIMPSON.—I ought to charge extra, for it is a hard thing to do. But here goes: We-e-in—win, throar—double-up, thrup, Winthrop; Gee-e-double-etchell, Getchell; Peabody, eabody-abody-body-ody-dy-y, Peabody; Winthrop Getchell Peabody. I guess I'll set down and rest! (*Sits down.*) Now I'll just run over it kinder fast, and I guess you'll like it. (*Spells it very rapidly, and rises.*) Say! How's that? Any more questions? It 'pears to me you are mighty particular!

TULLYHORN.—We will not detain you much longer. We are pleased—(*aside*) that's so, isn't it, doctor?—with the examination. Make yourself comfortable while we write a document for you.

SIMPSON (*to himself while the committee talk together*).—Document! That means stifercate. Well, times ain't now as they used to was to be! It used to was to be as to how

as that anybody could rise into the potent office of schoolmaster; but now 'tain't so as how as, without being zamined by this larned committee; and this is the way eddication is going to be *ris!* De-lightful task to rear the infant thought, and teach the young idee how to fire!—(*Aside.*) I do believe I have fooled old Tully! (*He walks up and down.*)

PELLET (*aside*).—Well, Mr. Tullyhorn, what do you say? Isn't he a genius? How are we going to get rid of him? We have had our fun in asking him questions, but what shall we do?

TULLYHORN.—I'm puzzled! He's evidently a keen Yankee—sharp, shrewd, but totally unfit to teach school; and yet he'll take it hard to be turned off. He little suspects how we have been making game of him; and I do feel a little guilty. I never will impose on any other person while I am on this committee. But I'll ask him a question or two, and some way may suggest itself to us to refuse him a certificate, without exciting his suspicions or rousing his anger.—(*Loud.*) Mr. Peabody!

SIMPSON (*turns quickly with his umbrella over his shoulder and knocks off an ornament from a shelf*).—Your humble servant, sir. Is my certificate ready? You've talked and writ long enough to make a dozen!

TULLYHORN.—I would like to ask one or two questions more. What has been your pursuit in life?

SIMPSON.—Well, if you urge the matter, I must tell you. My pursuit has been *old Tully's daughter Sarah!*

TULLYHORN (*jumps up in great excitement and strides toward candidate. Pellet follows*).—What do you mean, sir? No hesitation! By what right do you refer to my daughter?

SIMPSON (*slowly lays down umbrella and takes various*

disguising wraps off one by one; at last steps forth in his true character).—Well, Mr. Tullyhorn, what do you say, *now?* Who's fooled? Can I have my certificate? Or will you send me off? Hey? (*Punches his ribs with his thumb.*)

TULLYHORN.—You're a sly joker. You rather took the advantage of "old Tully." And as for friend Pellet and me, we are most ingloriously "sold." But we'll forgive you. Say, doctor?

PELLET.—Yes, Tully; but how about his *pursuit?*

TULLYHORN.—We will go straight to the *house* and see about that. (*They go out.*)

A CONFESSION OF LOVE.

CHARACTERS.

Nicholas Ball, *country gentleman with several daughters.*

Count Roseberry, *suitor for the hand of* VIOLET.

Violet, *beautiful, eccentric daughter of* BALL.

Situation.—*The* COUNT *has the consent of* VIOLET'S *father to make love to her, but his approaches have been baffled so perfectly that he cannot tell whether she has the first impulse of affection toward him. He tries in the guise of a priest to draw a confession from her, but she unmasks him. He then secrets himself behind his own portrait, hears her confess her love and steps forth to claim her.*

The scene takes place in a reception room or parlor. One corner is curtained off and behind the curtain is the picture of the COUNT *on an easel. The picture must be placed a little to one side so that the curtain need not be wholly drawn, as the* COUNT *is concealed there.*

Enter BALL, *followed by the* COUNT, *disguised as a Friar.*

BALL.—These things premised, you have my full consent
To try my daughter's humor;
But observe me, sir!——
I will use no compulsion with my child.
If I had tendered thus her sister Zamora,
I should not now have mourned a daughter lost!

Enter VIOLET.

VIOLET.—What is your pleasure?

BALL.—Know this holy man; (*Introducing the Count to her.*)
It is the father confessor I spoke of.
Though he looks young, in all things which respect
His sacred function he is deeply learned.

VIOLET (*aside*).—It is the Count!

BALL.—I leave you to his guidance.
To his examination and free censure,
Commit your actions and your private thoughts.

VIOLET.—I shall observe, sir—(*He goes out. Aside.*) Nay, 'tis he, I'll swear!

COUNT (*aside*).—Pray Heaven she don't suspect me! (*Aloud.*) Well, young lady, you have heard your father's commands?

VIOLET.—Yes, and now he has left us alone, what are we to do?

COUNT.—I am to listen and you are to confess.

VIOLET.—What! And then you are to confess, and I am to listen?—(*Aside.*) Oh! I'll take care you shall do penance though.

COUNT.—Pshaw!

VIOLET.—Well; but what am I to confess?

COUNT.—Your sins, daughter; your sins.

VIOLET.—What! all of them?

COUNT.—Only the great ones.

VIOLET.—The great ones! Oh, you must learn those of my neighbors, whose business it is, like yours, to confess everybody's sins but their own. If now you would be content with a few trifling peccadilloes, I would own them to you with all the frankness of an author, who gives his reader

the paltry errata of the press, but leaves him to find out all the capital blunders of the work himself.

COUNT.—Nay, lady, this is trifling: I am in haste.

VIOLET.—In haste! Then suppose I confess my virtues? You shall have the catalogue of them in a single breath.

COUNT. Nay, then, I must call your father.

VIOLET.—Why, then, to be serious:—If you will tell me of any very enormous offences which I may have lately committed, I shall have no objection in the world to acknowledge them to you.

COUNT.—It is publicly reported, daughter, you are in love.

VIOLET (*aside*).—So, so! Are you there?—That I am in love.

COUNT.—With a man—

VIOLET.—Why, what should a woman be in love with?

COUNT.—You interrupt me, lady.—A young man.

VIOLET.—I'm not in love with an old one, certainly.—But is love a crime, father?

COUNT.—Heaven forbid!

VIOLET.—Why, then, you have nothing to do with it.

COUNT.—Ay, but the concealing it is a crime.

VIOLET.—Oh, the concealing it is a crime.

COUNT.—Of the first magnitude.

VIOLET.—Why, then, I confess—

COUNT.—Well, what?

VIOLET.—That the Count Roseberry—

COUNT.—Go on!

VIOLET.—Is—

COUNT.—Proceed!

VIOLET.—Desperately in love with me.

COUNT.—Pshaw! That's not the point!

VIOLET.—Well, well, I'm coming to it: and not being

able in his own person to learn the state of my affections, has taken the benefit of clergy, and assumed the disguise of a friar.

COUNT.—Discovered!

VIOLET.—Ha! ha! ha!—You are but a young masquerader or you wouldn't have left your vizor at home. Come, come, Count, pull off your lion's apparel, and confess yourself an ass. (*Count takes off the Friar's gown.*)

COUNT.—Nay, Violet, hear me!

VIOLET.—Not a step nearer!—The snake is still dangerous, though he has cast his skin. I believe you are the first lover on record, that ever attempted to gain the affections of his mistress by discovering her faults. Now, if you had found out more virtues in my mind than there will ever be room for, and more charms in my person than ever my looking-glass can create, why, then, indeed—

COUNT.—What then?

VIOLET.—Then I might have confessed what it's now impossible I can ever confess; and so farewell, my noble count confessor! (*She goes out.*)

COUNT.—Farewell.

And when I've hit upon the longitude,
And plumbed the yet unfathomed ocean,
I'll make another venture for thy love.
Here comes her father.—I'll be fooled no longer.

Enter BALL.

BALL.—Well, sir, how thrive you?

COUNT.—E'en as I deserve:

Your daughter has discovered, mock'd at, and left me.

BALL.—Yet I've another scheme.

COUNT.—What is't?

BALL.—My daughter,

Being a lover of my art, of late

Has vehemently urged to see your portrait;
Which, now 'tis finish'd, I stand pledged she shall.
The picture's here (*He indicates with his hand the corner curtained off.*) and you must stand conceal'd.
And if, as we suspect, her heart leans tow'rds you,
In some unguarded gesture, speech or action,
Her love will suddenly break out.—Be quick!
I hear her coming.

COUNT.—There's some hope in this.

BALL.—It shall do wonders.—Hence! (*Count conceals himself.*)

Enter VIOLET.

VIOLET.—What, is he gone sir?

BALL.—Gone! D'ye think the man is made of marble? Yes, he is gone.

VIOLET.—For ever?

BALL.—Ay, for ever.

VIOLET.—Alas, poor Count!—Or has he only left you
To study some new character? Pray, tell me,
What will he next appear in?

BALL.—This is folly.
'Tis time to call your wanton spirits home—
You are too wild of speech.

VIOLET.—My thoughts are free, sir;
And those I utter——

BALL.—Far too quickly, girl;
Your shrewdness is a scarecrow to your beauty.

VIOLET.—It will fright none but fools, sir: men of sense must naturally admire in us the quality they most value in themselves; a blockhead only protests against the wit of a woman, because he cannot answer her drafts upon his understanding. But now we talk of the Count, don't you remember your promise, sir?

BALL (*aside*).—Umph!—What promise, girl?

VIOLET.—That I should see your picture of him.

BALL.—So you shall, when you can treat the original with a little more respect.

VIOLET.—Nay, sir, a promise!

BALL.—But, before I show it, tell me honestly, how do you like the Count, his person, and understanding?

VIOLET.—Why, as to his person, I don't think he's handsome enough to pine himself to death for his own shadow, like the youth in the fountain—nor yet so ugly as to be frightened to dissolution if he should look at himself in a glass. Then, as to his understanding, he has hardly wit enough to pass for a madman, nor yet so little as to be taken for a fool. In short, sir, I think the Count is very well worth any young woman's contemplation—when she has no better earthly thing to think about.

BALL.—Now I must go to other business, but the picture has been placed here. (*He draws curtain so as to conceal the Count and goes out.*)

VIOLET (*thinking herself alone*).—Confess that I love the Count!—A woman may do a more foolish thing than to fall in love with such a man, and a wiser one than to tell him of it. (*Looks at the picture.*) 'Tis very like him—the hair is a shade too dark—and rather too much complexion for a despairing enamorato. Confess that I love him!—Now there is only his picture. I'll see if I can't play the confessor a little better than he did. "Daughter, they tell me you're in love?"—"Well, father, there is no harm in speaking the truth."—"With the Count Roseberry, daughter?"—"Father, you are not a confessor, but a conjuror!"—"They add, moreover, that you have named the day for your marriage?"—"There, father, you are misinformed; for like a discreet maiden, I have left that for him

to do." (*She turns away from the picture and the Count comes forth.*) Then he should throw off his disguise—I should gaze at him with astonishment—he should open his arms, whilst I sunk gently into them—(*The Count catches her in his arms.*)—The Count!

Enter NICHOLAS BALL.

My father, too! Nay, then, I am fairly hunted into the toil. There, take my hand, Count, while I am free to give it.

TABLEAU. CURTAIN.

NOT QUITE.

Adapted from the play "Paul Pry," by John Poole, Esq.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Witherton, *an old man, somewhat feeble.*

Paul Pry, *a meddlesome inquisitive little man, in fantastic costume.*

Willis, *a young man, nephew to* MR. WITHERTON.

Grasp, *steward to* MR. WITHERTON.

Mrs. Subtle, *a middle-aged woman, of deceitful disposition and disagreeable face and manners—housekeeper to* MR. WITHERTON.

Marian, *a young woman.*

A Young Man.

Situation.—MR. WITHERTON, *a man of much property is entirely under the control of his housekeeper,* MRS. SUBTLE. *She has taken him out to walk with the distinct purpose to make him offer to marry her.* WILLIS *and* MARIAN *suspect her designs on* MR. WITHERTON'S *property and so are obnoxious to the housekeeper.* GRASP *knows other plots of* MRS. SUBTLE'S, *and on the strength of his knowledge hopes to get her hand in marriage. Everything is upset, however, by the inquisitive* PAUL PRY. MR. WITHERTON'S *proposal is never made to* MRS. SUBTLE.

The scene takes place in the sitting-room of MR. WITHERTON'S *country residence.*

Enter WILLIS *and* MARIAN, *conversing.*

WILLIS.—I have reason to believe that Mrs. Subtle's grand project is a marriage with my uncle—by the influence she would thus obtain over him, our ruin would be accomplished.

MARIAN.—And are there no means of preventing their marriage?

WILLIS.—I fear it will be difficult; when the affections of a solitary old man, a slave like him to circumstances and habit, are once entangled in the snares of a wily woman, it is no easy task to disengage them. But here she and my uncle come. We must not be seen together. Ha! 'tis too late—they are here.

Enter WITHERTON *leaning on* MRS. SUBTLE'S *arm.*

MRS. SUBTLE.—Gently, sir, gently. (*To Marian.*) What are you doing here? Why are you not in your own apartment?

MARIAN.—I—I was merely talking to Mr. Willis, ma'am.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Leave the room.

WITHERTON.—Speak mildly to her, my good Mrs. Subtle; consider—she is young and timid.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Young and timid indeed.

WITHERTON.—Go, my dear, Mrs. Subtle is a little severe in manner, but she means well. (*Marian crosses.*)

MARIAN.—I obey you, sir.

MRS. SUBTLE (*in an undertone*).—Obey me or count not on a long continuance here—begone! (*Exit Marian.*) Leave her to me, sir. (*To Witherton.*) I understand these matters best; (*To Willis, in a gentle tone.*) and you, Mr. Willis, to encourage a forward chit like that—I'm astonished at you.

WILLIS.—Indeed you mistake me.

MRS. SUBTLE. No matter, leave us.

WITHERTON.—Be within call, Willis, I would speak with you presently.

WILLIS.—I will, sir. (*Mrs. Subtle brings a chair forward for Witherton, who seats himself near Mrs. Subtle.*)

WITHERTON.—That girl is a favorite of mine, Mrs. Subtle, in her way—in her way, I mean. She was strongly recommended to me, by my friend Colonel Hardy, and I am sorry you have conceived so strange an antipathy to her.

MRS. SUBTLE.—And I am surprised you are so strongly attached to her. Do you know I am almost—I had nearly said a foolish word—jealous of her.

WITHERTON.—Jealous! Now Mrs. Subtle, you would banter me. But now we are alone, and secure from interruption, tell me what it is you would consult me upon—once while we were out, you were on the point of speaking, when we were intruded on by that meddling blockhead, Mr. Pry.

MRS. SUBTLE (*turning away*).—Oh, 'tis nothing, sir, a trifle.

WITHERTON.—You cannot deceive me; something sits heavily at your heart; explain the cause of it—you know me for your friend, your sincere friend. Come, speak freely.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Well, then, sir, since I never act in any important matter, but by your direction, I would ask your advice in this, of all others, the—most important.

WITHERTON.—Go on.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Mr. Grasp, who has long been attentive to me, at length importunes for my decision on the question of marriage.

WITHERTON.—Marriage Take a chair, Mrs. Subtle, take a chair. (*She sits.*)

MRS. SUBTLE.—Yes, sir. Hitherto I have never distinctly accepted, nor have I rejected the offer of his hand; wearied at length by my indecision, he has this morning insisted on knowing my intentions, one way or the other.

WITHERTON.—Well, well.

MRS. SUBTLE.—It is a serious question; my mind is still unsettled; my heart, alas! takes no part in the question. How would you advise me, sir?

WITHERTON.—Really, Mrs. Subtle, I was so little prepared for such a communication, that I hardly know—Grasp is an honest man—a very honest man.

MRS. SUBTLE.—He is a very honest man, yet my own experience has taught me that a very honest man may be a very—very bad husband. Then although I allow Mr. Grasp to be a very well meaning man—his temper——

WITHERTON.—That is none of the best, certainly.

MRS. SUBTLE.—His manners too—not that I believe he would willingly offend, are offensive. Even you, I fear, have observed that, for he has frequently addressed you in a mode which my affection—I would say, my respect for you, have induced me to reprove.

WITHERTON.—He does lack urbanity, I grant.

MRS. SUBTLE.—And to me, that is intolerable, for notwithstanding my situation here, I can never forget that I am the daughter of a gentleman. Then his taste and habits differ from mine.

WITHERTON.—These are important objections, Mrs. Subtle, considering that your first husband was as you have told me.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Speak not to me of him, sir, for that reminds me of one of the bitterest periods of my life; yet spite of Mr. Subtle's ill usage of me, I never once forgot the duty and obedience of a wife; but he was young, vain,

fickle, and I am too late convinced that it is not till a man is somewhat advanced in life—till his sentiments and habits are formed and fixed, that he can thoroughly appreciate the value of a wife's affection, or so regulate his conduct, as to insure her happiness, and his own.

WITHERTON.—That is a very sensible remark, Mrs. Subtle.

MRS. SUBTLE.—My father was an evidence of the truth of it, sir. My father was nearly sixty when he married.

WITHERTON.—Indeed! your own father?

MRS. SUBTLE.—Aye, sir, and he lived to the good old age of eighty-seven. But he was happy, and enjoyed a contented mind. How tenderly my poor mother loved him.

WITHERTON.—What was her age?

MRS. SUBTLE.—When she married him, about mine, sir. I believe it was the contemplation of the picture of their felicity, so constantly before my eyes, that confirmed my natural disposition for the quiet of domestic life. Ah, had I been fortunate in the selection of a partner.

WITHERTON.—Much—everything, depends on that, and I think that Grasp is not altogether—he is not at all the husband for you.

MRS. SUBTLE.—So my heart tells me, sir; yet, when I quit your house, would you have me live alone? without a protector?

WITHERTON.—How! quit my house!

MRS. SUBTLE.—Alas, that must I whether I accept his proposals or not. Yet let not that distress you, sir, for I doubt not—I hope, that when I am gone, my place may be supplied by some one equally attentive to your comforts, your happiness.

WITHERTON.—Do I hear aright? Quit my house, and wherefore?

MRS. SUBTLE.—I hardly know in what words to tell you;

and, after all, perhaps you will say I am a silly woman, to regard such idle slander, who can control the tongue of scandal? My care of you, my attentions, my unceasing assiduities, become the subject of remark; but I had resolved not to mention this to you; my unwearied attention to you, which is the result of mere duty—of friendship—perhaps of a sisterly affection, is said to spring from a deeper—a warmer source——

WITHERTON.—And were it so, dear Mrs. Subtle, are we accountable to a meddling world——

MRS. SUBTLE.—Ah, sir, you, a man, strong in the rectitude of your conduct, master of your own actions, master of your own actions, I say, and independent of the world, may set at naught its busy slanders. But I, an humble, unprotected woman—no, the path of duty lies straight before me; I must give my hand where I feel I cannot bestow my heart, and for ever quit a house where I have been but too happy.

WITHERTON.—Nay, by heaven, but you shall not; must your happiness be sacrificed? mine too? Ay, mine.

MRS. SUBTLE (*rises*).—Hold, sir, say no more. Do not prolong a delusion which I am endeavoring to dispel. If I have unwarily betrayed to you a secret, which I have scarcely dared to trust even to my own thoughts; if I have foolishly mistaken the kindness of a friend, for a more tender sentiment, forgive my presumption, and forgive her who, but for the lowliness of her station, might as an affectionate and devoted wife, have administered to your happiness; who conscious of her own unworthiness, must soon behold you for the last time.

WITHERTON.—Stay, dearest Mrs. Subtle, and listen to your friend, your best and truest friend. First promise me, that here you will remain.

MRS. SUBTLE.—But you have not yet advised me respecting Mr. Grasp's proposal, and I have promised him an immediate reply.

WITHERTON.—Attend to what I am about to say, and then, dearest Mrs. Subtle, let your own heart dictate your choice.

MRS. SUBTLE (*aside*).—'Tis done!

WITHERTON.—Were I longer to hesitate, I should be negligent of my own happiness, and unjust towards your merits; for if an attachment, long and severely tried, were not of itself sufficient to warrant me in—— (*A knock at the door.*)

MRS. SUBTLE (*as Witherton starts up*).—Curse on the interruption, when but another word had realized my hopes.

Enter PAUL PRY.

PRY.—Oh, ha, I see, billing and cooing, I hope I don't intrude?

MRS. SUBTLE.—You do, sir.

PRY.—Well, I am very sorry, but I came to show you the *Country Chronicle*; there is something in it I thought might interest you; two columns-full about a prodigious gooseberry, grown by Mrs. Nettlebed at the Priory. Most curious, shall I read it to you?

WITHERTON.—No, you are very good. (*Turns up impatiently.*)

PRY.—I perceive I am one too many. Well now, upon my life, (*Whispers her.*) if I had entertained the smallest idea——

MRS. SUBTLE.—What do you mean, sir.

PRY (*speaks mysteriously*).—Bless you, I see things with half an eye; but never fear me, I'm as close as wax.

Now, I say Mrs. Subtle, between ourselves—it shall go no farther, there *is* something in the wind, eh?

Mrs. Subtle.—I don't understand you.

Pry.—Well, well, you are right to be cautious; only I have often thought to myself it would be a good thing for both of you, he is rich—no one to inherit his fortune, and by all accounts, you have been very kind to him, eh?

Mrs. Subtle.—Sir!

Pry.—I mean no harm, but take my advice; service is no inheritance, as they say. Do you look to number one; take care to feather your nest. You are still a young woman, under forty, I should think, thirty-eight now—there, or thereabouts, eh?

Mrs. Subtle.—My respect for Mr. Witherton forbids me to say that his friend is impertinent.

Witherton (*to himself*).—This intrusion is no longer to be borne. (*Comes down near Pry.*) Have you any particular business with me, sir?

Pry.—Yes, you must know, I've seen a young fellow lurking about your friend Hardy's house, and I suspect there is something not right going forward in his family.

Witherton.—That is his business, not mine, sir.

Pry.—True, but I have been thinking that as you are his friend, it would be but friendly if you were just to drop in, and talk to him about it.

Witherton.—That is my business, and not yours.

Pry.—I don't say the contrary, but at all events, I'm determined to keep watch over——

Witherton.—That is your business, therefore you may do as you please; yet let me suggest to you, that this unhappy propensity of yours to meddle in matters which do not concern you, may one day or other produce very mischievous effects.

PRY.—Now I take that unkindly; what interest have I in trying to do a good-natured thing? Am I ever a gainer by it? But I'll make a vow that from this time forward I'll never interfere. Hush! there he is again; will you do me a favor? just allow me to go out this way.

WITHERTON.—Any way *out* you please.

PRY.—I'll give the alarm, and if I let him escape me this time—Follow! follow! follow! (*He goes out.*) Now, my lively spark, I'll have you.

WITHERTON.—What can be the meaning of all this! That busy fellow's interruption has thrown all my ideas into confusion.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Be composed, sir, take a chair and let us resume——

Enter GRASP *abruptly.*

Well, what is it you want, Mr. Grasp?

GRASP (*gruffly*).—You!

WITHERTON.—Mrs. Subtle is engaged just now.

GRASP.—No matter, she must come with me, I have something to say to her.

MRS. SUBTLE.—I'll come to you presently.

GRASP.—You must come at once. I am not to be made a dupe—come.—Mr. Willis is waiting to see you in the library, sir—now, Mrs. Subtle, if you please. (*Crosses and goes out.*)

WITHERTON.—Return quickly, dear Mrs. Subtle, and promise nothing till you have again consulted me.

MRS. SUBTLE. I will obey you, sir; you see how easily we poor weak women are diverted from our better resolutions. (*Witherton goes out.*) He is almost mine. (*She follows Grasp out.*)

CAPTAIN KEMPTHORN.

Adapted from "John Endicott," by Longfellow.

CHARACTERS.

Simon Kempthorn, *Captain of the Swallow, a rough, honest man of middle age.*

Ralph Goldsmith, *another sea-captain.*

Edward Butler, *treasurer of the Commonwealth, an old man with an ear trumpet.*

Walter Merry, *tithing-man of the colony, a tall thin man, with a hooked nose.*

Two citizens and a crowd.

Situation.—*Simon Kempthorn has brought to Boston three Quakers whom the authorities have put in prison and scourged. Captain Kempthorn has been put in the pillory for swearing and has also been bound by a bond of one hundred pounds to carry the Quakers back. In the second scene he is at the tavern of the Three Mariners puzzling as to how he will get away from port.*

There are lists of rules of good behavior hung up on the tavern walls.

The events are supposed to take place in Boston in 1665.

Scene I.

A street in front of the town house. KEMPTHORN *in the pillory.* MERRY *and a crowd are looking on.*

KEMPTHORN (*sings*).—

The world is full of care,
Much like unto a bubble;
Women and care, and care and women,
And women and care and trouble.

Good Master Merry, may I say confound?

MERRY.—Ah, that you may.

KEMPTHORN.—Well, then, with your permission,
Confound the Pillory!

MERRY.—That's the very thing
The joiner said who made the Shrewsbury stocks.
He said, confound the stocks, because they put him
Into his own. He was the first man in them.

KEMPTHORN.—For swearing, was it?

MERRY.—No, it was for charging;
He charged the town too much, and so the town,
To make things square, set him in his own stocks,
And fined him five pound sterling,—just enough
To settle his own bill.

KEMPTHORN.—And served him right;
But, Master Merry, is it not eight bells?

MERRY.—Not quite.

KEMPTHORN.—For, do you see? I'm getting tired
Of being perched aloft here in this cro' nest
Like the first mate of a whaler, or a Middy
Mast-headed, looking out for land! Sail ho!
Here comes a heavy-laden merchantman.
With the lee clews eased off, and running free
Before the wind. A solid man of Boston
A comfortable man, with dividends,
And the first salmon, and the first green peas.

A gentleman passes.

He does not even turn his head to look.
He's gone without a word. Here comes another,

A different kind of craft on a taut bowline,—
Deacon Giles Firmin the apothecary,
A pious and a ponderous citizen,
Looking as rubicund and round and splendid
As the great bottle in his own shop window!

DEACON FIRMAN *passes.*

And here's my host of the Three Mariners,
My creditor and trusty taverner,
My corporal in the Great Artillery!
He's not a man to pass me without speaking.

COLE *looks away and passes.*

Don't yaw so; keep your luff, old hypocrite!
Respectable, ah, yes, respectable.
You, with your seat in the new Meeting-house,
Your cow-right on the Common! But who's this?
I did not know the Mary Ann was in!
And yet this is my old friend, Captain Goldsmith,
As sure as I stand in the bilboes here.
Why, Ralph, my bow!

RALPH GOLDSMITH *comes in.*

GOLDSMITH.—Why, Simon, is it you?
Set in the bilboes?

KEMPTHORN.—Chock-a-block, you see,
And without chafing-gear.

GOLDSMITH.—And what's it for?

KEMPTHORN.—Ask that starbowline with the boat-hook there,
That handsome man.

MERRY (*bowing*).—For swearing.

KEMPTHORN.—In this town
They put sea-captains in the stocks for swearing,
And Quakers for not swearing. So look out.

GOLDSMITH.—I pray you set him free; he meant no harm;
'Tis an old habit he picked up afloat.

MERRY.—Well, as your time is out, you may come down.
The law allows you now to go at large.
Like Elder Oliver's horse upon the Common.

KEMPTHORN.—Now, hearties, bear a hand! Let go and haul.

KEMPTHORN *is set free, and comes forward, shaking* GOLDSMITH'S *hand.*

KEMPTHORN.—Give me your hand, Ralph. Ah, how good it feels!
The hand of an old friend.

GOLDSMITH.—God bless you, Simon!

KEMPTHORN.—Now let us make a straight wake for the tavern
Of the Three Mariners, Samuel Cole commander;
Where we can take our ease, and see the shipping,
And talk about old times.

GOLDSMITH.—First I must pay
My duty to the Governor, and take him
His letters and despatches. Come with me.

KEMPTHORN.—I'd rather not. I saw him yesterday.

GOLDSMITH.—Then wait for me at the Three Nuns and Count.

KEMPTHORN.—I thank you. That's too near the town pump.
I will go with you to the Governor's.
And wait outside there, sailing off and on;
If I am wanted, you can hoist a signal.

MERRY.—Shall I go with you and point out the way?

GOLDSMITH.—Oh, no, I thank you. I am not a stranger
Here in your crooked little town.

MERRY.—How now, sir?
Do you abuse our town? (*He goes out.*)
GOLDSMITH.—Oh, no offence.
KEMPTHORN.—Ralph, I am under bonds for a hundred pound
GOLDSMITH.—Hard lines. What for?
KEMPTHORN.—To take some Quakers back
I brought here from Barbadoes in the Swallow.
And how to do it I don't clearly see,
For one of them is banished, and another
Is sentenced to be hanged! What shall I do?
GOLDSMITH.—Just slip your hawser on some cloudy night;
Sheer off, and pay it with the topsail, Simon! (*They go out.*)

Scene II.

The parlor of the Three Mariners. KEMPTHORN *comes in.*

KEMPTHORN.—A dull life this,—a dull life anyway!
Ready for sea; the cargo all aboard,
Cleared for Barbadoes, and a fair wind blowing
From nor'-nor'-west; and I, an idle lubber,
Laid neck and heels by that confounded bond!
I said to Ralph, says I, "What's to be done?"
Says he: "Just slip your hawser in the night;
Sheer off, and pay it with the topsail, Simon."
But that won't do; because, you see, the owners
Somehow or other are mixed up with it.
Here are King Charles's Twelve Good Rules, that Cole
Thinks as important as the Rule of Three. (*Reads.*)
"Make no comparisons; make no long meals."
Those are good rules and golden for a landlord
To hang in his best parlor, framed and glazed!
"Maintain no ill opinions; urge no healths."

(*He steps to the table and drinks from a tankard of ale.*)

I drink the King's, whatever he may say,
And, as to ill opinions, that depends.
Now of Ralph Goldsmith I've a good opinion,
And of the bilboes I've an ill opinion;
And both of these opinions I'll maintain
As long as there's a shot left in the locker.

EDWARD BUTLER *with an ear-trumpet comes in.*

BUTLER.—Good morning, Captain Kempthorn.

KEMPTHORN.—Sir, to you.

You've the advantage of me. I don't know you.
What may I call your name?

BUTLER.—That's not your name?

KEMPTHORN (*raises his voice*).—Yes, that's my name. What's yours?

BUTLER.—My name is Butler.

I am the treasurer of the Commonwealth.

KEMPTHORN.—Will you be seated?

BUTLER.—What say? Who's conceited?

KEMPTHORN.—Will you sit down?

BUTLER.—Oh, thank you.

KEMPTHORN (*in a lower tone*).—Spread yourself upon this chair, sweet Butler.

BUTLER (*sitting down*).—A fine morning.

KEMPTHORN.—Nothing's the matter with it that I know of.

I have seen better, and I have seen worse.
The wind's nor' west. (*Very loud*). That's fair for them that sail.

BUTLER.—You need not speak so loud; I understand you. You sail to-day.

KEMPTHORN.—No, I don't sail to-day.

So, be it fair or foul; it matters not
Say, will you smoke? There's choice tobacco here.

BUTLER.—No, thank you. It's against the law to smoke.

KEMPTHORN.—Then, will you drink? There's good ale at this inn.

BUTLER.—No thank you. It's against the law to drink.

KEMPTHORN (*not so loud*).—Well, almost everything's against the law,
In this good town. Give a wide berth to one thing,
You're sure to fetch up soon on something else.

BUTLER.—And so you sail to-day for dear Old England.
I am not one of those who think a sup
Of this New England air is better worth
Than a whole draught of our Old England's ale.

KEMPTHORN.—Nor I. Give me the ale and keep the air.
But, as I said, I do not sail to-day.

BUTLER.—Ah, yes; you sail to-day.

KEMPTHORN.—I'm under bonds
To take some Quakers back to the Barbadoes;
And one of them is banished, and another
Is sentenced to be hanged.

BUTLER.—No, all are pardoned,
All are set free, by order of the Court;
But some of them would fain return to England.
You must not take them. Upon that condition
Your bond is cancelled.

KEMPTHORN (*aside*).—Ah, the wind has shifted!
(*To Butler.*) I pray you, do you speak officially?

BUTLER.—I always speak officially. To prove it,
Here is the bond. (*He rises and gives paper.*)

KEMPTHORN. And here's my hand upon it.
And, look you when I say I'll do a thing
The thing is done. Am I now free to go?

BUTLER. What say?

KEMPTHORN (*aside*).—I say, confound the tedious man
With his strange speaking-trumpet! (*To Butler.*)—Can
I go?

BUTLER.—You're free to go, by order of the Court.
Your servant, sir. (*He goes out.*)

KEMPTHORN (*shouting from the window*).
Swallow, ahoy! Hallo!
(*To himself*). If ever a man was happy to leave Boston,
That man is Simon Kempthorn of the Swallow!

BUTLER *comes back.*

BUTLER.—Pray did you call?

KEMPTHORN.—Call? Yes, I hailed the Swallow.

BUTLER.—That's not my name. My name is Edward
Butler.
You need not speak so loud.

KEMPTHORN (*shaking hands*). Good by! Good by!

BUTLER.—Your servant, sir.

KEMPTHORN.—And yours a thousand times! (*They go out.*)

THE RESTLESS YOUTH.

CHARACTERS.

Henry Swift, *a retired tailor, small and slow.*

John Swift, *his son, flashily dressed, of shallow brain and always in great haste.*

Mr. Houghton, *a rich retired brewer.*

Miss Houghton, *his daughter.*

A waiter, a servant.

Situation.—*Young* SWIFT *a spendthrift son, returns to his father, discovers that the old man is wealthier than he supposed, and hurries him off to call on a rich brewer in the vicinity who has a pretty daughter. The fun of the dialogue centres in the restlessness of young* SWIFT.

Old SWIFT *in the second scene carries a cane just a yard long, and it has a mark or ribbon in the centre to mark the half-yard.*

The dialogue takes place in a small country town in England.

Scene I.

A poorly furnished room. Young SWIFT *enters dragging in his father who has just been roused from sleep, and wears a dressing-gown.*

SWIFT.—Come along, dad.

FATHER (*yawning half-awake*).—Yes, sir,—yes, sir—I'll measure you directly—I'll measure you directly.

SWIFT.—He's asleep. Awake !

FATHER.—What's the matter, eh? What's the matter?

SWIFT.—What's the matter? I've found fifty thousand in that letter. (*He points to a letter protruding from the pocket of his father's coat which lies on a chair.*)

FATHER.—Indeed! (*Opens the letter eagerly.*) Ah! Johnny have you found out—

SWIFT.—I have—that you are worth—how much?

FATHER.—Why, since what's past——

SWIFT.—Never mind what's past.

FATHER.—I've been a fortunate man. My old partner used to say, "Ah! you are lucky, Swift. Your needle always sticks in the right place."

SWIFT.—No, not always. (*Shrugging.*) But how much?

FATHER.—Why, as it must out, there are fifty thousand lent on mortgage. Item, fifteen thousand in the consols—item—

SWIFT.—Never mind the items. The total, my dear dad, the total.

FATHER.—What do you think of a plum?

SWIFT.—A plum! oh, sweet, agreeable, little, short word!

FATHER.—Besides seven hundred and ninety——

SWIFT.—Never mind the odd money; that will do. But how came you so rich, dad? Hang me, you must have kept moving.

FATHER.—Why, my father, forty years ago, left me five thousand pounds; which, at compound interest, if you multiply——

SWIFT.—No; you have multiplied it famously. (*Aside.*) It's my business to reduce it.—Now, my dear dad, in the first place, never call me Johnny.

FATHER.—Why, what must I call you?

SWIFT.—John—short—John.

FATHER.—John! oh, John!

SWIFT.—That will do. And in the next place, sink the tailor. Whatever you do, sink the tailor.

FATHER.—Sink the tailor! what do you mean?

SWIFT.—I've news for you. We are going to be introduced to Mr. Houghton the rich brewer.

FATHER.—You don't say so! Huzzah! it will be the making of us.

SWIFT.—To be sure. Such fashion! such style!

FATHER.—Ah, and such a quantity of liveries, and—oh, dear me. (*With great dejection.*)

SWIFT.—What's the matter?

FATHER (*sighing*).—I forgot I had left off business.

SWIFT.—Business! confound it! Now, pray keep the tailor under, will you? I'll—I'll send a telegram to London. (*Runs to the table.*)

FATHER.—A telegram! for what?

SWIFT.—I don't know.

WAITER *enters.*

WAITER.—The bill of fare, gentlemen.

SWIFT.—Bring it here. (*Reads.*) "Turbots—salmon—soles—haddock—beef — mutton—veal — lamb — pork—chickens—ducks—turkeys—puddings—pies. Serve it all; that's the short way.

WAITER.—All!

SWIFT.—Every bit.

FATHER.—No, no, nonsense. The short way, indeed! Come here, sir. Let me see—(*reads.*) "um—um. Ribs of beef." That's a good thing; I'll have that.

SWIFT.—What?

WAITER.—Ribs of beef, sir.

SWIFT.—Are they the short ribs?

WAITER.—Yes, sir.

SWIFT.—That's right.

WAITER.—What liquor would your honor like?

SWIFT (*jumping up.*)—Spruce beer.

WAITER.—Very well, sir.

SWIFT.—I must have some clothes.

FATHER.—I'm sure, that's a very good coat.

SWIFT.—Waiter! I must have a dashing coat, for the nabob. Is there a rascally tailor anywhere near you?

WAITER.—Yes, sir; there are two close by. (*They look at each other.*)

SWIFT.—Umph! then tell one of them to send me some clothes.

WAITER.—Sir, he must take your measure.

FATHER.—To be sure he must.

SWIFT.—Oh, true! I remember the fellows do measure you somehow with long bits of—well send for the scoundrel. (*Exit Waiter.*)

FATHER.—Oh, for shame of yourself! I've no patience.

SWIFT.—Like you the better; hate patience as much as you do; ha, ha! must swagger a little.

FATHER.—Ah! I'm too fond of you, I am, John. Take my fortune, but only remember this—by the faith of a man, I came by it honestly—and all I ask is, that it may go as it came.

SWIFT.—Certainly. But we must keep moving, you know.

FATHER.—Well, I don't care if I do take a bit of a walk with you.

SWIFT.—Bit of a walk! hang it! we'll have a gallop together. Come along, dad. Push on, dad. (*Swift grabs the coat from the chair and pushes his father before him out of the room. His father tries in vain to take off his dressing gown.*)

Scene II.

A finely furnished apartment in the mansion of MR. HOUGHTON. *Enter* SWIFT *and his father*, MR. HOUGHTON *and daughter.*

MISS HOUGHTON.—Welcome to Houghtonham Hall, gentlemen.

SWIFT.—Charming house! plenty of room! (*Runs about and looks at everything.*)

FATHER.—A very spacious apartment indeed.

HOUGHTON.—Yes, sir; but, I declare, I forget the dimensions of this room.

FATHER.—Sir, if you please, I'll measure it—my cane is exactly a yard, good, honest measure; 'tis handy—and that mark is the half-yard——

SWIFT (*overhears and snatches the cane from him*).—Confound it! the pictures, father—look at the pictures; (*pointing with the cane*) did you ever see such charming——

MISS HOUGHTON.—Do you like pictures?

SWIFT.—Exceedingly, ma'am; but I should like them a great deal better, if they just moved a little.

MISS HOUGHTON.—Ha! ha! I must retire to dress; till dinner, gentlemen, adieu. (*She goes out.*)

SWIFT (*to his father*).—Father! you'll ruin everything! can't you keep the tailor under?

HOUGHTON.—Your son seems rather impatient.

FATHER.—Very, sir,—always was. I remember a certain duke——

SWIFT.—That's right, lay the scene high; push the duke; push him as far as he'll go.

FATHER.—I will, I will. I remember a certain duke used to say, "Mr. Swift, your son is as sharp as a needle."

SWIFT.—At it again!

FATHER.—As a needle——

SWIFT (*interrupting him*).—Is true to the pole. As a needle is true to the pole, says the duke, so will your son, says the duke be to everything spirited and fashionable, says the duke. (*Aside to his father.*) Am I always to be tortured with your infernal needles?

HOUGHTON (*aside*).—Now to sound them.—I hear gentlemen, your business in this part of the country is with Sir Hubert Stanley, respecting some money transactions.

FATHER.—'Tis a secret, sir.

HOUGHTON.—Oh! no—the baronet avows his wish to sell his estate.

FATHER.—Oh, that alters the case.

HOUGHTON.—I think that it would be a desirable purchase for you—I should be happy in such neighbors—and if you should want forty or fifty thousand, ready money, I'll supply it with pleasure.

FATHER.—Oh, sir, how kind! If my son wishes to purchase it, I would rather leave it entirely with him.

SWIFT.—And I would rather leave it entirely to you.

HOUGHTON.—Very well, I'll propose for it. There is a very desirable borough interest; then you could sit in parliament.

SWIFT.—I in parliament? ha! ha!

FATHER.—No! that would be a botch.

SWIFT.—No, no; I was once in the gallery—crammed in—no moving—expected to hear the great guns—up got a little fellow, nobody knew who, gave us a three hours' speech—I got deuced fidgetty—the house called for the question, I joined in the cry—"the question, the question!" says I—a member spied me—cleared the gallery—got hustled by my brother spectators—obliged to scud—oh! it would never do for me.

HOUGHTON.—But you must learn patience.

SWIFT.—Then make me speaker—if that wouldn't teach me patience, nothing would.

HOUGHTON.—Do you dislike, sir, parliamentary eloquence?

FATHER.—Sir, I never heard one of your real, downright parliamentary speeches in my life—never. (*Yawns.*)

SWIFT.—By your yawning, I should think you had heard a great many.

HOUGHTON.—Oh, how lucky! at last I shall get my dear speech spoken. Sir, I am a member, and I mean to——

SWIFT.—Keep moving.

HOUGHTON.—Why, I mean to speak, I assure you; and——

SWIFT.—Push on, then.

HOUGHTON.—What, speak my speech? That I will—I'll speak it.

SWIFT (*to his father*).—Oh, the mischief! don't yawn so.

FATHER (*to his son*).—I never get a comfortable nap, never!

SWIFT (*to his father*).—You have a very good chance now—confound all speeches—oh!

HOUGHTON.—Pray be seated. (*They sit one on each side of Houghton.*) Now we will suppose that the chair. (*He points to a chair.*)

FATHER.—Suppose it the chair! Why, it is a chair, isn't it?

HOUGHTON.—Pshaw! I mean——

SWIFT.—He knows what you mean—'tis his humor.

HOUGHTON.—Oh, he's witty!

SWIFT.—Oh, remarkably brilliant indeed. (*He looks significantly at his father.*)

HOUGHTON (*to the father*).—What, are you a wit, sir?

FATHER.—A what? Yes, I am—I am a wit.

HOUGHTON.—Well, now I will begin. Oh, what a delicious moment! The house when they approve, cry "Hear him, hear him!" I only give you a hint in case anything should strike you.

SWIFT.—Push on.—(*Aside.*) I can never stand it.

HOUGHTON.—Now shall I charm them. (*He addresses the chair.*) "Sir, had I met your eye at an earlier hour, I should not have blinked the present question, but having caught what has fallen from the opposite side, I shall scout the idea of going over the usual ground"—(*Aside.*) What? no applause yet? (*Old Swift has fallen asleep and young Swift has risen and gone to the back of the platform and is presumably looking out of the window.*) "But I shall proceed, and I trust without interruption." (*He looks round and discovers the father asleep.*) Upon my soul, this is—what do you mean, sir?

FATHER (*waking up*).—What's the matter?—Hear him! hear him!

HOUGHTON.—Pray, sir, do you not blush at this—(*He catches sight of young Swift at the window.*) What the devil!

SWIFT (*looking round*).—Hear him! hear him!

HOUGHTON (*in despair*).—By the soul of Cicero, 'tis too much!

FATHER.—Oh, Johnny, for shame to fall asleep!—I mean, to look out of the window. I am very sorry, sir, anything should go across the grain—(*Aside.*) I say, John, smooth him down.

SWIFT (*to his father*).—I will, I will; but what shall I say?—(*Aloud.*) The fact is, sir, I heard a cry of fire—upon—the—the—the water, and,——

HOUGHTON.—Well, but do you wish to hear the end of my speech?

SWIFT.—Upon my honor, I do.

HOUGHTON.—Then we will only suppose this little interruption a message from the Lords, or something of that sort. (*The Swifts sit; young Swift twists about uneasily.*) Where did I leave off?

SWIFT.—Oh! I recollect; at "I therefore briefly conclude with moving an adjournment." (*He rises.*)

HOUGHTON.—Nonsense! no such thing! (*He puts the young man down in the chair.*) Oh! I remember! "I shall therefore proceed, and I trust without interruption"

SERVANT *enters.*

Get out of the room, you villain!—"Without interruption"——

SERVANT.—I say, sir——

SWIFT.—Hear him! hear him!

SERVANT.—Dinner is waiting.

SWIFT (*jumping up*).—Dinner waiting! Come along, sir.

HOUGHTON.—Never mind the dinner.

SWIFT.—But I like it smoking.

FATHER.—So do I. Be it ever so little, let me have it hot.

HOUGHTON.—Won't you hear my speech?

SWIFT.—To be sure we will—but now to dinner. Come, we'll move together. Capital speech! Push on, sir. Come along, dad. Push him on, dad. (*They force Houghton out.*)

TESTING THE SUITORS.

CHARACTERS.

Squire Penniman, *a kind, but shrewd gentleman of middle life.*

Colonel Harrington, *a self-confident, fine-appearing young man of great wealth and aristocracy.*

Mr. Carter, *a modest, honest young man, of no great fortune or family.*

A Servant.

Situation.—SQUIRE PENNIMAN *is the guardian of a fair young lady,* ADA DENTON, *who has innumerable suitors. Two in particular claim her hand. The Squire takes advantage of the failure of Brown and Company to find out by stratagem the real worth of the two suitors and the sincerity of their affections.*

The value of the dialogue depends on showing the great devotion of the Colonel at first and his vain attempts to explain himself later.

The scene is laid in the elegant library of SQUIRE PENNIMAN. *There are books, a desk, table, etc., in the room.*

Enter SQUIRE PENNIMAN, *followed by a servant.*

SQUIRE PENNIMAN (*speaking to servant*).—Not at home to any one, excepting Colonel Harrington and Mr. Carter.—(*Servant goes out.*) This failure of Brown's great house,

however deplorable in itself, at least bids fair to put an end to my troubles as a guardian. Ever since Ada Denton has been under my care, she has been besieged by as many suitors as Penelope. We shall see whether the poor destitute girl will prove as attractive as the rich heiress. Harrington is an ardent lover, Carter a modest one; Harrington is enormously rich, Carter comparatively poor; but whether either——

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Colonel Harrington, sir.

Enter COLONEL HARRINGTON.

SQUIRE.—My dear Colonel, good morning! I took the liberty of sending for you. (*Servant goes out.*)

COLONEL HARRINGTON (*bows*).—Most proud and happy to obey your summons. I believe that I am before my time; but where the heart is, you know, Squire Penniman—how is the fair Ada Denton? I hope she caught no cold in the Park yesterday?

SQUIRE.—None that I have heard of.

COLONEL.—And that she has recovered the fatigue of Tuesday's ball?

SQUIRE.—She does not complain.

COLONEL.—But there is a delicacy, a fragility in her loveliness, that mingles fear of her health, with admiration of her beauty.

SQUIRE.—She is a pretty girl, and a good girl; and a very good girl, considering that, in her quality of an heiress, she has been spoilt by the adulation of every one that has approached her ever since she was born.

COLONEL (*with great apparent devotion*).—Oh, my dear sir, you know not how often I have wished that Miss Denton were not an heiress, that I might have an opportunity of

proving to her and to you the sincerity and disinterestedness of my passion.

SQUIRE.—I am glad to hear you say so.

COLONEL.—I may hope, then, for your approbation and your influence with your fair ward? You know my fortune and family?

SQUIRE.—Both are unexceptionable.

COLONEL.—The estate which I inherited from my father is large and unencumbered; that which will devolve to me from the maternal side, is still more considerable. I am the last of my race, Squire Penniman; and my mother and aunts are, as you may imagine, very desirous to see me settled. They are most anxious to be introduced to Miss Denton; my aunt, Lady Lucy, more particularly so. Ada Denton, even were she portionless, is the very creature whom they would desire as a relative; the very being to enchant them.

SQUIRE.—I am extremely glad to hear you say so.

Enter MR. CARTER.

Mr. Carter! pray be seated. I sent for you both, gentlemen, as the declared lovers of my ward, Miss Denton, in order to make to you an important communication.

MR. CARTER.—I am afraid that I can guess its import.

COLONEL.—Speak, Squire Penniman—pray speak!

SQUIRE.—Have you heard of the failure of the great firm of Brown and Co.?

COLONEL.—Yes. But what has that to do with Ada Denton?—To the point, my good sir; to the point.

SQUIRE.—Well, then, to come at once to the point,—did you never hear that, though not an ostensible partner, Mr. Denton's large property was lodged in the firm?

MR. CARTER.—I had heard such a report.

COLONEL.—Mr. Denton's property in Brown's house! the house of a notorious speculator! What incredible imprudence!—all?

SQUIRE.—The whole.

COLONEL.—What miraculous folly! (*He starts to his feet.*) Then Miss Denton is a beggar.

SQUIRE.—Whilst I live, Ada Denton can never want a home. But she is now a portionless orphan; and she desired that you, gentlemen, might be apprised of the change of her fortunes, with all convenient speed, and assured that no advantage would be taken of proposals made under circumstances so different.

MR. CARTER (*with sincerity*).—Oh, how needless an assurance!

COLONEL (*with hesitation*).—Miss Denton displays a judicious consideration.

SQUIRE (*with a little sarcasm*).—I am, however, happy to find, Colonel Harrington, that your affection is so entirely centered on the lovely young woman apart from her riches, that you will feel nothing but pleasure in an opportunity of proving the disinterestedness of your love.

COLONEL (*hesitatingly*).—Why, it must be confessed, Squire Penniman——

SQUIRE.—Your paternal estate is so splendid as to render you quite independent of fortune in a wife.

COLONEL (*he walks back and forth*).—Why, y-e-s. But really, my estate; what with the times and one drawback and another. Nobody knows what I pay in annuities to my father's old servants. In fact, Squire Penniman, I am not a rich man; not by any means a rich man.

SQUIRE.—Then your great expectations from your mother, Lady Sarah, and your aunt, Lady Lucy.

COLONEL.—Yes. But, my dear sir, you have no notion

of the aversion which Lady Lucy entertains for unequal matches—matches where all the money is on one side. They never turn out well, she says; and Lady Lucy is a sensible woman—a very sensible woman. As far as my observation goes, I must say that I think her right.

SQUIRE.—In short, then, Colonel Harrington, you no longer wish to marry my ward?

COLONEL.—Why really, my good sir, it is with great regret that I relinquish my pretensions; and if I thought that the lady's affections were engaged—but I am not vain enough to imagine that, with a rival of so much merit——

MR. CARTER (*aside*).—Contemptible coxcomb!

COLONEL.—Pray, assure Miss Denton of my earnest wishes for her happiness, and of the sincere interest I shall always feel in her welfare. I have the honor to wish you a good morning. (*Going.*)

SQUIRE.—A moment, sir, if you please. What say you, Mr. Carter? Have these tidings wrought an equal change in your feelings?

MR. CARTER.—They have indeed wrought a change, sir, and a most pleasant change; since they have given hope such as I never dared to feel before. God forgive me for being so glad of what has grieved her! Tell Ada Denton that for her sake, I wish that I were richer but that never shall I wish she was rich for mine. Tell her that if a fortune adequate to the comforts, though not to the splendors of life, a pleasant country-house, a welcoming family, and an adoring husband, can make her happy, I lay them at her feet. Tell her——

SQUIRE.—My dear fellow, you had far better tell her yourself. I have no doubt but she will accept your disinterested offers, and I shall heartily advise her to do so; but you must make up your mind to a little disappointment.

MR. CARTER (*puzzled*).—How! what! How can I be disappointed, so that Miss Denton will be mine?

SQUIRE.—Disappointment is not quite the word. But you will have to encounter a little derangement of your generous schemes. When you take my pretty ward, you must e'en take the burden of her riches along with her.

COLONEL (*astonished*).—She is not ruined, then?

SQUIRE.—No, sir; Mr. Denton did at one time place a considerable sum in the firm of Messrs. Brown; but finding the senior partner to be, as you observed, Colonel, a notorious speculator, he prudently withdrew it.

COLONEL (*indignantly*).—And this was a mere stratagem?

SQUIRE.—Really, sir, I was willing to prove the sincerity of your professions before confiding to you such a treasure as Ada Denton, and I think that the result has fully justified the experiment. But for your comfort, I don't think she would have had you, even if you had happened to behave better. My young friend here had made himself a lodgment in her heart, of which his present conduct proves him to be fully worthy. I have the honor to wish you a very good morning. (*Colonel Harrington goes out.*)—Come, Carter, Ada's in the music-room. (*They go out.*)

THE EMPEROR AND THE DESERTER.

CHARACTERS.

Frederick the Great, *Emperor of Prussia.*

Fritz Schmidt, *a young shipcarpenter who deserted from the army.*

Mrs. Schmidt, *mother to Fritz.*

An Imperial Officer, *in uniform.*

Situation. SCHMIDT *has deserted from the German army, gone to Holland to become a carpenter. Young* FREDERICK, *seeing the throne to be his in the near future, goes to the same place under an assumed family name and works with* FRITZ, *whose character is so pleasing to the youth that when he becomes Emperor he seeks him out for the superintendency of his shipping interests.*

There should be marked contrast in the dress of FREDERICK *and* FRITZ.

Enter MRS. SCHMIDT *and* FRITZ.

FRITZ.—Well, mother, I mus'n't be skulking about here in Leipzig any longer. I must leave you and go back to Holland, to my shipbuilding. At the risk of my life I came here and at the risk of my life I must go back.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Ah! Fritz, Fritz! if it hadn't been for your turning deserter, you might have been a corporal by this time.

FRITZ.—Look you, mother! I was made a soldier against my will, and the more I saw of a soldier's life the more I

hated it. As a poor journeyman carpenter I am at least free and independent; and if you will go with me to Holland, you shall keep house for me and take care of my wages.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—I should be a drag on you, Fritz! You will be wanting to get married by and by; moreover, it will be hard for me to leave the old home at my time of life. (*A knock is heard at the door.*)

FRITZ.—Some one is knocking at the door. Wait, mother, till I have concealed myself. (*Hurries about.*)

Enter FREDERICK *in citizen's dress.*

FREDERICK.—What ho! comrade! No dodging; Don't try to get out of the room. Didn't I see you through the window as I stood in the street?

FRITZ.—Frederick! My old fellow-workman in the shipyard at Saardam! Give me your hand, my hearty! (*They shake hands.*) How came you to be here in Leipzig? No shipbuilding going on in this part of the country, surely?

FREDERICK.—No; but a plenty of it at Hamburg, under the Emperor.

FRITZ.—They say that the Emperor is in Leipzig at this present time?

FREDERICK.—Yes; he passed through your street this morning.

FRITZ.—So I heard. But I was afraid to look out at him. I say, Frederick, how did you find me out?

FREDERICK.—Why, happening to see the name of Mrs. Schmidt over the door, it occurred to me, after I returned to the palace——

FRITZ.—To the palace?

FREDERICK.—Yes; I always call the place at which I put up a palace. It's a way I have.

FRITZ.—You always *were* a funny fellow, Frederick!

FREDERICK.—As I was saying, it occurred to me that Mrs.

Schmidt might be the mother or aunt of my old messmate; and so I put on this simple disguise, and——

FRITZ.—Ha, ha, ha! Sure enough, it *is* a disguise for you,—a disguise, Frederick, you're not much used to,—the disguise of a gentleman. Where did you get such fine clothes?

FREDERICK (*sternly*).—How dare you, sir, interrupt me in my story?

FRITZ.—Eh? Don't joke in that way again, Frederick, if you love me. Do you know, you half frightened me out of my boots by the tone in which you said "How dare you, sir?" If you had been a corporal of marines, you couldn't have done it better.

FREDERICK.—Well, well, you see how it was I happened to drop in. Ah, Fritz! Many's the big log we've chopped at together, through the long summer day, in old Von Block's shipyard.

FRITZ.—That we have, Frederick! Why not go back with me to Saardam?

FREDERICK.—I can get better wages at Hamburg.

FRITZ.—If it weren't that I'm afraid of being overhauled for taking that long walk away from my post, when I was a soldier, I would go with you to Hamburg.

FREDERICK.—How happened you to venture back here? The laws, you know, are pretty severe against deserters. What if I should inform against you?

FRITZ.—You couldn't; for, when I made you my confidant, you promised you'd never blab. Ah! I told you *my* secret, but you didn't tell me *yours*,—though you confessed that you had one. How happened I to venture back? Well, you must know that this old mother of mine wanted badly to see me; and then I had left behind me here a sweetheart.

FREDERICK.—A sweetheart! Ah! I see, now, what brought you back.

FRITZ.—Don't laugh, Frederick! She has waited for me, faithful creature that she is, these five years.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Yes; and had no lack of offers, and good ones, too, during that time.

FRITZ.—And the misery of it is, that I am still too poor to take her back with me to Holland. But next year, if my luck continues, I mean to return and marry her.

FREDERICK.—Do you know that a fellow can make a pretty little sum by exposing a deserter?

FRITZ.—Don't joke on that subject, Frederick. You'll frighten the old woman. Frederick, old boy, I'm so glad to see you—(*Shakes hands, but his attention is suddenly arrested as he looks out the window over Frederick's shoulders.*) Hallo! Soldiers at the door? What does this mean? An officer? Frederick, excuse me, but I'm particular about the company I keep.

FREDERICK.—Stay! I give you my word it is not you they want. They are friends of mine.

FRITZ.—Oh, if that's the case, I'll stay. But, do you know one of those fellows looks wonderfully like my old commanding officer?

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER (*bowing and handing some papers*).—A despatch from Berlin, your Majesty, claiming your immediate attention. (*Frederick takes it and reads it.*)

MRS. SCHMIDT (*to Fritz*).—Majesty! He called him majesty!

FRITZ.—Majesty! I say, Frederick, what does he mean by majesty?

OFFICER.—Knave! know you not that this is the Emperor?

FRITZ.—Oh! you can't fool me! I've known him you

see before now. This is my old friend Frederick Meyer.

OFFICER.—Down on your knees, blockhead, to Frederick, Emperor of Prussia.

FRITZ.—Blockhead? Mr. Officer, if it's equally agreeable to you, keep a civil tongue in your head.

MRS. SCHMIDT (*kneeling to the Emperor*).—O your Majesty, your Majesty, don't slay the poor boy! He knew no better! Indeed, he knew no better! He's only my son—the staff of my age. Let him be whipped; but don't kill him—don't kill him!

FRITZ (*pulling her up*).—Nonsense, mother! This is only one of Frederick's jokes. He keeps it up well, though. Ha-ha—umph. And those despatches you are reading, Frederick!

OFFICER.—Irreverent blockhead! How dare you interrupt his Majesty?

FRITZ.—Twice you've called me blockhead. Don't you think that's being rather familiar? Frederick, have you any objection to my throwing your friend out of the window?

OFFICER.—Ha! Now I look closer, I remember you. You're a deserter. I arrest you.

FRITZ (*aside*).—It's all up with me! And there stands Frederick as unconcerned as if nothing had happened.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—I'm all in a maze. Good Mr. Officer, spare the poor boy! Take all I have—but spare him!

OFFICER.—Impossible! He must go before a cour-tmartial. He must be shot.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—O woe is me! Woe is me! That ever my poor boy should be shot.

FREDERICK.—Officer, I have occasion for the services of your prisoner. The arrest is set aside.

OFFICER.—Your Majesty's will is absolute. (*Frederick and the Officer converse in dumb show.*)

FRITZ (*aside*).—Majesty again! What does it all mean? A light breaks in upon me. Now I remember,—there were rumors in Holland just before I left, that the Emperor had been working in one of the shipyards. Can my Frederick be the Emperor?

FREDERICK.—Well, Schmidt, you have my secret now,—and we are even.

FRITZ.—And you are——

FREDERICK.—The Emperor.

MRS. SCHMIDT (*kneeling*).—O your Majesty! Change his punishment to imprisonment for life.

FREDERICK (*aiding her to rise*).—Rise, Madam. Your son, Baron Schmidt, is safe.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Baron Schmidt?

FREDERICK.—I want him to superintend my shipyard at Hamburg. No words! Prepare, both of you, to leave for the new city to-morrow. Baron Schmidt, make that sweetheart of yours a Baroness this very night and bring her with you. No thanks. I understand it all. I have business claiming my care, or I would stop to see the wedding. (*He hands Schmidt a purse.*) Take and use, as you may need, this purse of ducats. My secretary shall call with further orders in the morning. Farewell. (*He goes out*).

FRITZ (*dazed*).—O Frederick, Frederick!—I mean your Majesty, your Majesty!——

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Down on your knees, Fritz.—I mean Baron Schmidt! Down on your knees! (*Aside, as she goes out.*) To think that Fritz should live to be a baron!

FRITZ (*with a twinkle in his eye*).—That court-martial, Mr. Officer, does not seem likely to come off.

OFFICER.—Don't speak of it, Baron. I am your very humble servant, Baron.—After you, Baron. (*Fritz goes out followed by the officer.*)

MIKE GETS A JOB.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Goodrich, *a well-dressed man of middle age.*

Michael Carnes, *an Irishman in search of a job, looking a little dilapidated*

Situation.—Mr. Goodrich *is seated at a table reading or writing when a servant shows in the Irishman. The great change of topics by* Mr. Goodrich *is merely meant to make* Mike *talk while his character is estimated.*

Mike (*taking off his hat and bowing*).—An' plaze yer honor, would ye be after giving employment to a faithful servant, who has been recimmended to call upon yer honor?

Goodrich.—You appear to have walked some distance; does it rain?

Mike.—Never a drop, plaze yer honor.

Goodrich (*looking out at window*).—Ah! I see the sun shines now; *post nubila Phœbus.*

Mike.—The post has not yet arrived, sir.

Goodrich.—What may I call your name?

Mike.—My name is Michael Carnes, and I have always been called Mike, and you are at liberty to call me that same.

Goodrich.—Well, Mike, who was your late master?

Mike.—Mr. Jacobs, plaze yer honor; and a nicer man never brathed.

GOODRICH.—How long did you live with Mr. Jacobs?

MIKE.—In troth, sir, I can't tell. I passed my time so pleasantly in his sarvice, that I niver kept any account of it, at all, at all. I might have lived with him all the days of my life, and a great deal longer, if I had plazed to do so.

GOODRICH.—Why, then, did you leave him?

MIKE.—It was by mutual agrament. The truth was, a slight difference arose between us, and he said I should not live with him longer; and at the same instant, you see, I declared I would not live with him: so we parted on good terms—by agrament, you see.

GOODRICH.—Was not your master a proud man?

MIKE.—Indade he was—bless his honest sowl! He would not do a mane act for the univarse.

GOODRICH.—Well, Mike, how old are you now?

MIKE.—I am just the same age of Patrick O'Leary; he and I were born the same wake.

GOODRICH.—And how old is he?

MIKE.—He is just my age. He and I are just of an age, you see, only one of us is older than the other; but which is the oldest I cannot say, neither can Patrick.

GOODRICH.—Were you born in Dublin?

MIKE.—No, sir, plaze yer honor, though I might have been, if I had desired; but, as I always preferred the country, I was born there; and, plaze God, if I live and do well, I'll be buried in the same parish I was born in.

GOODRICH.—You can write, I suppose.

MIKE.—Yes, sir; as fast as a dog can trot.

GOODRICH.—What is the usual mode of traveling in Ireland?

MIKE.—Why, sir, if you travel by water, you must take a boat; and, if you travel by land, either in a chaise or on horseback; and thim as can't afford either of them are

obliged to trudge it on foot, which to my mind, is decidedly the safest and chapest mode of moving about.

GOODRICH.—And which is the pleasantest season for traveling?

MIKE.—Faith, sir, I think that season whin a man has most money in his pocket.

GOODRICH.—I think your roads are passably good.

MIKE.—They are all quite passable, if you only pay the tollman.

GOODRICH.—I understand you have many black cattle in Ireland.

MIKE.—Faith, we have plenty of every color.

GOODRICH.—I think you have too much rain in your country.

MIKE.—So every one says; but Sir Boyle has promised to bring in an act of Parliament in favor of fair weather, yes, sir; and I am sure the poor hay-makers and turf-cutters will bless him for it. He is the man that first proposed that every quart-bottle should hold just two pints.

GOODRICH.—As you have many fine rivers, I suppose you have an abundance of good fish.

MIKE.—And well you may say that; for water never wet better ones. Why, sor, I won't tell you a lie; but, if you were at the Boyne, you could get salmon and trout for nothing; and if you were at Ballyshanny, you'd get them for much less.

GOODRICH.—Well, Mike, you are a bright fellow. Come in to-morrow and I'll see what I can do for you.

MIKE.—Pace to your good sowl! I'll be on hand, sor. (*He bows and goes out, and then Mr. Goodrich goes out.*)

THE STUPID LOVER.

CHARACTERS.

Margaret, *a plainly-dressed young lady.*

Donald, *a well-dressed young gentleman.*

Situation.—CONSTANCE, *with whom* DONALD *is desperately in love has just left the room in bad humor.* MARGARET *is trying to tell* DONALD *that* CONSTANCE *as deeply returns his affection, but* DONALD *is stupid to the end. The references to* DONALD *in the scene which follows, must not be made too pointed by* MARGARET, *or the delicacy of the situation will be lost.*

MARGARET *sits near the front of the platform and has some fancy work in her hands.* DONALD, *after the first exclamation, walks to and fro behind her.*

There should be two chairs and a small stand on which is placed a vase of flowers. If the platform is large enough other accessories may be added, as a table, near the front, a bookcase at the rear, a mirror at the side. Any object, such as a book, may be used instead of a vase of flowers, if desired.

DONALD (*to Constance*).—Oh, Constance! (*To Margaret.*) What *have* I done?

MARGARET (*aside*).—Oh, it isn't what you've *done*, Donald, it's what you don't do. (*Aloud.*) Oh, it's only

a little temper. You say she's an angel. Well, that's the temper of an angel.

DONALD.—I'm afraid it's my coming here that puts her out.

MARGARET.—Oh, no—it isn't. She was going out before you came. (*Pause.*) To tell you the truth, Donald, there's something very seriously the matter with Constance. I'm a good deal worried about her.

DONALD.—You don't mean she's ill, Margaret? It seems very sudden. It's nothing, really — really dangerous, I suppose?

MARGARET.—Well, she's got it very bad, and I shouldn't be surprised if she never got over it.

DONALD.—Why have you never told me of this before? Has it been going on for long?

MARGARET.—It took her last summer—a short time after you first met her, in fact; and it's been getting worse ever since.

DONALD (*going a little towards her*).—Has nothing been done for it?

MARGARET.—Nothing.

DONALD.—But surely——

MARGARET.—It's high time something *was*. Of course it is. Will you help me to do it?

DONALD (*going to her and sitting beside her*).—You know I will, Margaret, and how glad I shall be of the chance. I'd give my right hand to save her an instant's pain.

MARGARET (*looking at him*).—Offer it to her. It might do her good.

DONALD (*rising, mistaking her meaning*).—It isn't kind to ridicule me. It's only a figure of speech, I know, but I meant it. (*Crosses.*)

MARGARET (*with a sigh*).—He is stupid!

DONALD.—Who? I?

MARGARET.—You! You stupid! Good gracious, no!—what an idea! No, I was thinking of *him*.

DONALD.—Him! What him?

MARGARET.—Why, the *him*. The him that all this trouble is about. The him that Constance is in love with.

DONALD.—In love with?

MARGARET.—Yes, in love with. We poor little weak women do fall in love sometimes; we're not like you men. You cynical men of the world, of course, never do such foolish things.

DONALD.—I wish to God we never did. We're fools for doing so. (*Pacing up and down the room.*) I can't believe it. (*Crosses.*)

MARGARET.—Can't believe what?

DONALD (*turns*).—That Constance can be in love. She is so cold. She's said herself over and over again that she could never love anybody.

MARGARET.—You don't expect a girl to love *anybody*, do you? Constance is very particular in that sort of thing. "Can't be in love." Why anything else than a man would have seen it for himself six months ago.

DONALD.—You're right. I've been blind. I'm beginning to see now. I'm beginning to understand. I'm beginning to understand why she's always been so hard and cold to *me*, why she's been annoyed at my coming here. I suppose I've been getting in the other fellow's way. Who—who is it? Do I know him?

MARGARET.—Um—m! I hardly think you do.

DONALD.—What's his name?

MARGARET.—Well, I don't know whether I ought to tell you without Constance's consent—you see.

DONALD (*turning round sharply*). — Margaret, you're playing with me. You're joking.

MARGARET.—I'm not joking, Donald. Constance loves this man with her whole heart and soul as only women do love. Her whole life is in his hands. It's no joking matter for her.

DONALD (*throws himself into chair and leans his head on his hand*).—Nor for me, either.

MARGARET (*aside*).—Poor boy! It's too bad to tease him, really.

DONALD (*after a pause, in a changed, hard voice*).—What sort of fellow is it? Can't you tell me anything about him? What do *you* think of him, Margaret?

MARGARET.—*I* like him.

DONALD.—Do you think he'll make her happy?

MARGARET.—Yes, I really think he would. He loves her devotedly—I'm sure of that, and he is as kind and gentle as he is good and true. He's my idea of a gentleman, and I think Constance will be very lucky to get him.

DONALD (*sneeringly*).—I should think so, too. It's a pity he hasn't one or two faults, though. Perfection is apt to become monotonous. (*Rises and resumes his pacing.*)

MARGARET.—Oh, he's got faults. There's nothing to grumble at on that head, I assure you. To begin with, he's exceedingly—well—not exactly stupid, you know, but dull of comprehension. And then, he's conceited and foppish, (*glancing at his dress,*) and extravagant, (*looking at flowers.*) and sarcastic, and proud, and obstinate. And smokes—and drinks—and tells awful stories, and swears—fearful! I heard him once when he tumbled over the cat in the dark, and didn't know I was there. Ugh! it makes my blood run cold to think of it. And the cat swore, too, very nearly as bad. 'Twas a regular slanging match. It

was his fault though, he'd no business to tumble over the poor animal—only he's so clumsy. (*Donald, in walking about has just knocked up against the table and upset a vase full of flowers.*) And then he's occasionally bad-tempered, and at times quite violent. (*He is ramming the flowers back into the vase very roughly.*)

DONALD.—I'm sorry for your notion of a gentleman. *I* should call him—perhaps I had better not say what I should call him. Poor Constance! Ah, well! I hope he will make her happy, that's all. What's he like? I suppose he's good-looking enough. These sort of men are generally all right on the outside. (*He sits so that Margaret has a good profile view of his face.*)

MARGARET (*looking at him critically—he does not notice it*).—Well, I should hardly call him handsome. He's rather good-looking, though, except, perhaps, his nose. (*Donald now turns round with his back to Margaret.*) *I don't always* like his manners.

DONALD.—Poor Constance! Poor Constance! And she's going to marry this—this *gentleman?*

MARGARET.—I didn't say she was going to marry him.

DONALD (*turning round*).—*Not* going to marry him?

MARGARET.—Oh, and I didn't say she wasn't going to marry him, either. All I said was that she was in love with him. He hasn't asked her yet.

DONALD.—Hasn't asked her!

MARGARET.—I wish you wouldn't repeat all my words. Don't you know any of your own?

DONALD.—But you said he loved her.

MARGARET.—I know I did.

DONALD.—How do you know he does?

MARGARET.—Why, he's told me so.

DONALD.—Why doesn't he tell her?

MARGARET.—The very question I keep on asking myself.

DONALD (*jumping up*).—The man's an idiot!

MARGARET.—That's just what I say. I get so aggravated with him, I can't tell you. I feel inclined sometimes to bang his head against the wall. I shall do it one of these days, I know I shall.

DONALD.—Yes! I should like to help you. Has he any reason for not asking her? (*He stands wrapped in thought and answers next two questions mechanically.*)

MARGARET.—I think sometimes he hasn't any reason of any kind. And *she* hasn't got much more. They're pretty well matched. He is frightened to open his mouth to *her*, and she's afraid to look at *him*. He's worrying himself to death because he can't get her, and she's fretting herself into an early grave because he won't have her. And there they'll go on playing at this ridiculous game until they each die of a broken heart at the cruelty of the other one. Now what would you do with a couple like that?

DONALD.—What would I do?

MARGARET.—Yes, what would you do if you were in my place?

DONALD.—If I were in your place?

MARGARET.—Donald! (*He rises and comes over.*) If you'll look on that bottom shelf, (*Pointing to a book-shelf at back*) near the end (*He follows her directions.*) you'll find a dictionary. There's a lot of words in that, and if——

DONALD.—I beg your pardon. I'm so upset, I hardly know what I'm saying. I don't know what you could do, really.

MARGARET.—If we could only start them on the right track, you know, they'd rush into each other's arms.

DONALD.—You must let him know, somehow that she—she cares for him. Can't you drop a hint?

MARGARET.—Drop a hint! Ah, you evidently *don't* know him. I must introduce you to him. I want to have your opinion of him?

DONALD.—If you take my advice you'll keep us apart. (*Crosses.*)

MARGARET.—Oh, I think you'll like him when you know him.

DONALD.—Margaret, I'm not of a violent nature. But for Heaven's sake, don't let me and this man meet. You've done me enough harm as it is, never saying a word of all this before—letting me live on all these months in a fool's paradise when you knew there was no hope for me. (*Margaret rises and crosses while Donald is speaking.*) My life's ruined. Let that suffice. Don't torture me with the sight of the man who has won all the happiness I've lost. Let him enjoy his triumph. But don't let him come near enough to me to be strangled. Don't—(*Talking rather loudly.*)

MARGARET.—Hush! Not so loud! He's here!

DONALD (*staring round*).—Here! Where?

MARGARET (*she has come close up to him and now takes him by the back of the head, turns him round and thrusts his face close against the looking-glass*).*—There! (*She goes out.*)

DONALD.—Oh, Margaret. (*Donald follows her.*)

* If there is no mirror on the wall, a small hand-mirror may be ready for Margaret to pick it up just before she says, "*There!*"

OUR DAUGHTER.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Duffy, *a stock-broker, who has accumulated a fortune and moved uptown.*

Mrs. Duffy, *a good sized woman, anxious to make some show in the world.*

Situation.—Mr. Duffy *goes home at noon earlier than usual in order to consult his wife about their daughter's prospects. Both have been thinking and planning for her future welfare and each fears the other has not her happiness most at heart. Each rejects the other's proposals with indignation until the suitor's name is pronounced. They then rejoice that both had the same man in mind.*

Mrs. Duffy *is sitting by a table, and is working at some embroidery, when* Mr. Duffy *enters with his overcoat on and his hat in his hand.*

Duffy (*he takes off his overcoat and puts it on a chair*).—My dear, there's rare news from the Exchange. Mining stock is mounting every minute.

Mrs. Duffy (*she does not turn round to greet him*).—I am glad to hear it, my dear.

Duffy.—Yes, I thought you would be glad to hear of it. I have just sent the clerk to watch how matters go—I should have gone myself, but I wanted to speak of an affair of some importance to you——

Mrs. Duffy (*with some impatience*).—Ay, ay, you have

always some affair of great importance. (*She looks round and sees his coat and hat on the chair.*) Why didn't you leave your coat in the hall!

DUFFY.—My dear, don't talk about that coat. I have another matter.—I have been thinking that it is high time we had fixed our daughter; 'tis high time that Charlotte were married.

MRS. DUFFY.—You think so, do you? I have thought so many a time these three years; and so has she too, I fancy. I wanted to talk to you about the same subject.

DUFFY.—You did? Well; he, he, he!—I vow I'm pleased at this—Why, our inclinations do seldom jump together.

MRS. DUFFY.—Jump! No, I should wonder if they did, and how comes it to pass now? I suppose you have been employing some of your brokers, as usual; or perhaps advertising, as you used to do; but I expect to hear no more of these tricks, now that we are come up to the fashionable end of the town.

DUFFY.—No, no, my dear, this is no such matter. The gentleman I intend——

MRS DUFFY.—You intend!

DUFFY.—Yes, I intend.

MRS. DUFFY.—You intend. What! do you presume to dispose of my child without my consent? Mind your money matters, Mr. Duffy: look at your bulls and your bears,—but leave to me the management of my child. (*She rises and walks to and fro.*) What! Things are come to a fine pass indeed! I suppose you intend to marry the poor innocent to one of your city cronies, your clerks, your supercargoes, packers or dry salters; but I'll have none of them, Mr. Duffy, no, I'll have none of them. It shall never be said, that, after coming to this end of the town, the

great Miss Duffy was forced to trudge into the city again for a husband.

DUFFY (*sinking back in his chair aghast*).—Why, you are mad, Mrs. Duffy.

MRS. DUFFY.—No, you shall find I am not mad, Mr. Duffy;—that I know how to dispose of my child, Mr. Duffy.—What! did my poor dear brother leave his fortune to me and my child, and shall she now be disposed of without consulting me? (*She covers her eyes with her handkerchief, and falls into her chair.*)

DUFFY (*bending forward in his chair*).—Why, you are mad, certainly! If you will but hear me, you shall be consulted—Have I not always consulted you?—To please you, was I not inclined to marry my daughter to a lord? And has she not been hawked about, till the peerage of three kingdoms turn up their noses at you and your daughter? Did I not treat with my Lord Spindle, with Signor Macaroni, and with Herr Eselmann? And did we not agree, for the first time in our lives, that it would be better to find out a merchant for her, as the people of quality now-a-days marry for only a winter or so?

MRS. DUFFY (*relenting and turning toward him*).—Very well, we did so; and who, pray, is the proper person to find out a match for her? Who, but her mother, Mr. Duffy?—who goes into company with no other view, Mr. Duffy;—who flatters herself she is no contemptible judge of mankind, Mr. Duffy;—yes, Mr. Duffy, as good a judge as any woman on earth, Mr. Duffy.

DUFFY.—That I believe, Mrs. Duffy.

MRS. DUFFY.—Who then but me should have the disposal of her? And very well I have disposed of her. I have got her a husband in my eye.

DUFFY.—You got her a husband?

MRS. DUFFY.—Yes, I have got her a husband.

DUFFY (*rising and striding about*).—No, no, no, Mrs. Duffy, that will never do.—What! have I been toiling upwards of fifty years,—up early, down late, shopkeeper and housekeeper, made a great fortune, which I could never find in my heart to enjoy—and now, when all the comfort I have in the world, the settlement of my child, is in agitation, shall I not speak? Shall I not have leave to approve of her husband?

MRS. DUFFY.—There, there! You are getting into your tantrums, I see.

DUFFY (*with more and more excitement*).—What! did I not leave the city, every friend in the world with whom I used to pass an evening? Did I not, to please you, take this house here? Nay, did I not make a fool of myself by going to learn to come in and go out of a room? Did I not put on a sword, too, at your desire? And had I not like to have broken my neck down stairs, by its getting between my legs, at that diabolical Lady what-d'ye-call-her's rout? And did not all the footmen and chairmen laugh at me?

MRS. DUFFY (*laughing*).—And well they might, truly. An obstinate old fool——

DUFFY.—Ay, ay, that may be; but I'll have my own way —I'll give my daughter to the man I like—I'll have no *Sir This* nor *Lord Tother*—I'll have no fellow with his hair down to his shoulders, and one glass in his eye and——

MRS. DUFFY.—Why, Mr. Duffy, you are certainly mad, raving, distracted.—No, the man I propose——

DUFFY.—And the man I propose——

MRS. DUFFY.—Is a young gentleman of fortune, discretion, parts, sobriety, and connections.

DUFFY.—And the man I propose is a gentleman of abilities, fine fortune, prudence, temperance, and every virtue.

MRS. DUFFY.—And his name is——

DUFFY.—And his name is Burton.

MRS. DUFFY.—Burton! (*She pushes back her chair in amazement.*)

DUFFY.—Yes, Burton, I say, and a very pretty name, too.

MRS. DUFFY.—What! Mr. Burton, of Utica?

DUFFY.—Yes, Mr. Burton of Utica.

MRS. DUFFY.—Oh, my dear Mr. Duffy, you delight me! Mr. Burton is the very man I meant.

DUFFY.—Is it possible? Why, where have you met him?

MRS. DUFFY.—Oh, at several places: but particularly at Mrs. Grundy's assemblies.

DUFFY.—Indeed! was ever anything so fortunate? Didn't I tell you that our inclinations agreed; but I wonder that he never told me that he was acquainted with you.

MRS. DUFFY.—How odd that he should never tell me he had met with you! But I see he is a prudent man; he was determined to be liked by both of us. But where did you meet with him?

DUFFY.—Why, he bought some stock of me; but I am so—— This is very satisfactory, isn' tit, Mrs. Duffy, to have Charlotte so well fixed.

MRS. DUFFY.—Well, we'd better see the child. (*She moves away.*)

DUFFY.—Wait! She can't object, can she?

MRS. DUFFY.—Of course not.—There, Duffy, take away that old coat. (*She points at it in scorn.*) I'll find Charlotte. (*She goes out.*)

DUFFY (*as he gathers up his coat and hat*).—Well, who'd have thought. (*He goes out.*)

HIS OWN PILLS.

CHARACTERS.

Sir Charles Downing, *a tall, elderly, dignified man.*

Doctor Kawphin, *a very lean, learned, and timid man, with spectacles on.*

Mrs. Stout, *a very fleshy woman, hostess of the Red Horse Inn.*

Situation.—Sir Charles *has fallen from his horse and thereby sustained some injuries. He is quickly carried into the Inn. Although in great haste to depart, the hostess and the doctor with an eye to business have, up to the opening of this dialogue, managed to detain him with real and fancied ills.*

Enter the Doctor, *followed by* Mrs. Stout.

Mrs. Stout.—Nay, nay, another fortnight.

Doctor.—It can't be. The man's as well as I am—have some mercy! He hath been here almost three weeks already.

Mrs. Stout.—Well, then, a week.

Doctor.—We may detain him a week.

Enter Sir Charles, *unobserved in the rear, in his dressing-gown, with a drawn sword.*

You talk now like a reasonable hostess,
That sometimes has a reck'ning—with her conscience.

Mrs. Stout.—He still believes he has an inward bruise.

DOCTOR.—I would to Heaven he had! Or that he'd slipt
His shoulder blade, or broke a leg or two,
(Not that I bear his person any malice)
Or lost an arm, or even sprain'd his ankle!
MRS. STOUT.—Ay, broken anything except his neck.
DOCTOR.—However, for a week I'll manage him,
Though he has the constitution of a horse——
A farrier should prescribe for him.
SIR CHARLES (*aside*).—A farrier!
DOCTOR.—To-morrow he must once again be bled;
Next day my new-invented patent draught:—
Then I have some pills prepared.
On Thursday we throw in the bark; on Friday?—
SIR CHARLES (*coming forward*).—Well, sir, on Friday?—what on Friday? come,
Proceed——
DOCTOR.—Discovered!
MRS. STOUT.—Mercy, noble sir! (*They fall on their knees.*)
DOCTOR.—We crave your mercy.
SIR CHARLES.—On your knees? 'tis well!
Pray, for your time is short.
MRS. STOUT.—Nay, do not kill us!
SIR CHARLES.—You have been tried, condemned, and only wait
For execution. Which shall I begin with?
DOCTOR.—The lady, by all means, sir!
SIR CHARLES.—Come, prepare. (*To the Hostess.*)
MRS. STOUT.—Have pity on the weakness of my sex!
SIR CHARLES.—Tell me, thou quaking mountain of gross flesh,
Tell me, and in a breath, how many poisons—(*He raises*

his sword threateningly to the doctor, who is about to make off.)

If you attempt it. (*The doctor sinks into a chair. To Hostess.*) have you cooked up for me?

MRS. STOUT.—None, as I hope for mercy!

SIR CHARLES.—Is not thy wine a poison?

MRS. STOUT.—No, indeed, sir!

'Tis not, I own, of the first quality:

But——

SIR CHARLES.—What?

MRS. STOUT.—I always give short measure, sir.

And ease my conscience that way?

SIR CHARLES.—Ease your conscience!

I'll ease your conscience for you!

MRS. STOUT.—Mercy, sir!

SIR CHARLES.—Rise, if thou canst, and hear me.

MRS. STOUT.—Your commands, sir?

SIR CHARLES.—If in five minutes all things are prepared

For my departure, you may yet survive.

MRS. STOUT.—It shall be done in less.

SIR CHARLES.—Away, thou lump-fish! (*She goes out.*)

DOCTOR (*he suddenly drops abjectly to his knees and speaks to himself*).—So, now comes my turn!—'tis all over with me!—

There's dagger, rope, and ratsbane in his looks!

SIR CHARLES.—And now, thou sketch and outline of a man!

Thou thing that hast no shadow in the sun!

Thou eel in a consumption, eldest born

Of Death on Famine! Thou anatomy

Of a starved pilchard!—

DOCTOR.—I do confess my leanness—I am spare!

And therefore spare me!

SIR CHARLES.—Why wouldst thou have made me
A thoroughfare for thy whole shop to pass through?
DOCTOR.—Man, you know, must live!
SIR CHARLES.—Yes: he must die, too.
DOCTOR.—For my patients' sake!
SIR CHARLES.—I'll send you to the major part of them—
The window, sir, is open;—come, prepare——
DOCTOR.—Pray consider! (*He shakes visibly.*)
I may hurt some one in the street.
SIR CHARLES.—Why, then, I'll rattle thee to pieces in a dice-box,
Or grind thee in a coffee-mill to powder;
For thou must sup with Pluto:—So, make ready!
Whilst I, with this good small sword for a lancet,
Let thy starved spirit out—for blood thou hast none—
And nail thee to the wall, where thou shalt look
Like a dried beetle with a pin stuck through him.
DOCTOR.—Consider my poor wife!
SIR CHARLES.—Thy wife!
DOCTOR.—My wife, sir!
SIR CHARLES.—Hast thou dared think of matrimony, too?
No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife?
DOCTOR.—I took a wife because I wanted flesh.
I have a wife and three angelic babes,
Who, by those looks, are well nigh fatherless!
SIR CHARLES (*turning away*).—Well, well! Your wife and children shall plead for you.
Come, come, the pills! Where are the pills? Produce them.
DOCTOR.—Here is the box. (*He brings out a large box of enormous pills.*)
SIR CHARLES.—Were it Pandora's, and each single pill
Had ten diseases in it, you should take them.

(*The doctor holds out the box to Sir Charles who refuses to touch it. The doctor loosens the cover while Sir Charles utters these two lines.*)

DOCTOR.—What, all? (*In horror he drops the box and the pills roll about the floor.*)

SIR CHARLES.—Ay, all; and quickly, too.—Come, sir, begin!

(*The doctor takes one.*) That's well:—another.

DOCTOR.—One's a dose!

SIR CHARLES.—Proceed, sir!

DOCTOR.—What will become of me?—(*He crawls slowly about the floor while Sir Charles watches and makes him swallow all.*)

Let me go home, and set my shop to rights,
And, like immortal Cæsar, die with decency!

SIR CHARLES.—Away! And thank thy lucky star I have not
Betrayed thee in thy own mortar, or exposed thee
For a large specimen of the lizard genus.

DOCTOR (*with a groan*).—Would I were one—for they (*He puts his hand on his stomach.*) can feed on air!

SIR CHARLES (*motioning away with his sword*).—Home, sir! And be more honest.

DOCTOR.—If I am not
I'll be more wise at least! (*He goes out.*)

SIR CHARLES (*stands sternly watching his departure*).—Now to other business. (*He goes out on the other side.*)

LOUIS XIV. AND HIS MINISTER.

Adapted from "The Refugees," by A. Conan Doyle.

CHARACTERS.

Louis XIV., *King of France.*

Louvois, *Minister of War.*

Bontems, *valet to the King.*

Situation.—Louis XIV. *is awaiting the arrival of the Archbishop of Paris, who is to marry him to* Madame de Maintenon. *His minister of war brings in two bags of mail for his inspection. The dialogue is concerned with the reading of letters from these bags.*

The King wears a curled wig, a dark coat, black under-coat, scarlet silk inner vest, black velvet knee-breeches, red stockings, diamond-buckled, high-heeled shoes. On his breast are pinned various emblems, among them the cross of the order of St. Louis. When he walks he carries a cane.

Louvois *and* Bontems *wear similar costumes though less pretentious.*

Louis *sits by the table, his chin upon his hands, his elbows upon the table, with eyes staring vacantly at the wall, in moody, solemn silence. A tap at the door.* Louis *springs up eagerly.* Bontems *steps just inside the door.*

Bontems.—Your Majesty, Louvois would crave an interview.

King (*with a gesture, as he sits*).—Admit him, then.

LOUVOIS *enters and* BONTEMS *retires.*

LOUVOIS (*with a low bow*).—Sire, I trust that I do not intrude upon you.

KING.—No, no, Louvois. My thoughts were in truth beginning to be very indifferent company, and I am glad to be rid of them.

LOUVOIS.—Your Majesty's thoughts can never, I am sure, be anything but pleasant. But I have brought you here something which I trust may make them even more so.

KING.—Ah! What is that?

LOUVOIS.—When so many of our young nobles went into Germany and Hungary, you were pleased in your wisdom to say that you would like well to see what reports they sent home to their friends; also what news was sent out from the court to them.

KING.—Yes.

LOUVOIS.—I have them here—all that the courier has brought in, and all that are gathered to go out, each in its own bag. The wax has been softened in spirit, the fastenings have been steamed, and they are now open. (*He holds an open bag to the King.*)

KING (*taking out a handful of letters and looking at the addresses*).—I should indeed like to read the hearts of those people. Thus only can I tell the true thoughts of those who bow and simper before my face. I suppose (*A glance of suspicion suddenly flashes from his eyes.*) that you have not yourself looked into these?

LOUVOIS.—Oh, sire, I had rather die!

KING.—You swear it?

LOUVOIS.—As I hope for salvation!

KING (*selecting one*).—Hum! There is one among these which I see is from your own son.

LOUVOIS (*changing color, and stammering*). — Your

Majesty will find that he is as loyal out of your presence as in it, else he is no son of mine.

KING (*opening the letter*).—Then we shall begin with his. Ha! it is but ten lines long. "Dearest Achille, how I long for you to come back! The court is as dull as a cloister, now that you are gone. My ridiculous father still struts about like a turkey-cock, as if all his medals and crosses could cover the fact that he is but a head lackey, with no more real power than I have. He wheedles a good deal out of the king, but what he does with it I cannot imagine, for little comes my way. I still owe those ten thousand livres to the man in the Rue Orfèvre. Unless I have some luck at lansquenet, I shall have to come out soon and join you." Hum! I did you an injustice, Louvois. I see that you have *not* looked over these letters.

LOUVOIS (*with intense agony in his face and protruding eyes*).—The viper! Oh, the foul snake in the grass! I will make him curse the day he was born.

KING.—Tut, tut, Louvois. You are a man who has seen much of life, and you should be a philosopher. Hot-headed youth says ever more than it means. Think no more of the matter.—But what have we here? A letter from my dearest girl to her husband, the Prince of Conti. I would pick her writing out of a thousand. Ah, dear soul, she little thought that my eyes would see her artless prattle! Why should I read it, since I already know every thought of her innocent heart? (*He unfolds the pink sheet with a smile, which fades as he glances down the page. He springs to his feet with a snarl of anger.*) Minx! Impertinent, heartless minx! Louvois, you know what I have done for the princess. You know that she has been the apple of my eye. What have I ever grudged her? What have I ever denied her?

LOUVOIS.—You have been goodness itself, sire.

KING.—Hear what she says of me: "Old Father Grumpy is much as usual, save that he gives a little at the knees. You remember how we used to laugh at his airs and graces! Well, he has given up all that, and though he still struts about on great high heels, like a Landes peasant on his stilts, he has no brightness at all in his clothes. Of course all the court follow his example, so you can imagine what a nightmare place this is. Then this woman still keeps in favor, and her frocks are as dismal as Grumpy's coats: so when you come back we shall go into the country together, and you shall dress in red velvet, and I shall wear blue silk, and we shall have a little colored court of our own in spite of my majestic papa." (*The king drops the letter, and sinks his face in his hands.*) You hear how she speaks of me, Louvois.

LOUVOIS.—It is infamous, sire; infamous!

KING.—She calls me names—*me*, Louvois!

LOUVOIS.—Atrocious, sire.

KING.—And my knees! One would think that I was an old man!

LOUVOIS.—Scandalous! But, sire, I would beg to say that it is a case in which your Majesty's philosophy may well soften your anger. Youth is ever hot-headed, and says more than it means. Think no more of this matter.

KING.—You speak like a fool, Louvois. The child that I have loved turns upon me, and you ask me to think no more of it. Ah, a king can trust least of all those who have his own blood in their veins.—What writing is this? (*He picks up another letter.*) It is the good Cardinal de Bouillon. This sainted man loves me. I will read you his letter, Louvois, to show you that there is still such a thing as loyalty and gratitude in France. (*He reads.*) "My

dear Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon." Ah, it is to him he writes. "I promised when you left that I would let you know, from time to time how things were going at court, as you consulted me about bringing your daughter up from Anjou, in the hope that she might catch the king's fancy." What! what! Louvois! What villainy is this? "The Sultan goes from bad to worse. The Fontanges was at least the prettiest woman in France; the Montespan was a fine woman in her day; but fancy his picking up now with a widow who is older than himself, a woman, too, who does not even try to make herself attractive, but kneels at her prie-dieu or works at her tapestry from morning to night. They say that December and May make a bad match, but my own opinion is that two Novembers make an even worse one." Louvois! Louvois! I can read no more. Have you a lettre de cachet?

LOUVOIS.—There is one here, sire. (*He indicates a drawer in the table.*)

KING.—For the Bastille?

LOUVOIS.—No; for Vincennes.

KING.—That will do very well. Fill it up, Louvois! Put this villain's name in it! Let him be arrested to-night, and taken there in his own calèche. The shameless, ungrateful, foul-mouthed villain!—Why did you bring me these letters, Louvois? Oh, why did you yield to my foolish whim? Mon dieu, is there no truth, or honor, or loyalty in the world? (*He stamps with his feet and shakes his hands in the air in frenzy.*)

LOUVOIS.—Shall I, then, put back the others?

KING.—Put them back, but keep the bag.

LOUVOIS.—Both bags?

KING.—Ah! I had forgot the other one. (*Louvois leaves the letters he is putting into the first bag and going*

round behind the king empties some of the letters out of the second bag on the other side of the table.) Perhaps I have at least some honest subjects at a distance. Let us take one hap-hazard. Who is this from? (*He opens it.*) Ah! it is from the Duc de la Rochefoucauld. He has ever seemed to be a modest and dutiful young man. What has he to say? The Danube—Belgrade—the Grand Vizier—Ah! (*He gives a cry as if he had been stabbed.*)

LOUVOIS (*stepping forward in alarm*).—What, then, sire?

KING.—Take them away, Louvois! Take them away! I would that I had never seen them! I will look at them no more. He gibes even at my courage, I who was in the trenches when he was in his cradle! "This war would not suit the king," he says, "for there are battles, and none of the nice little safe sieges which are so dear to him." Pardieu, he shall pay to me with his head for that jest! Ay, Louvois, it will be a dear gibe to him. But take them away. I have seen as much as I can bear. (*The minister thrusts the letters back into the bag and puts it one side. Then he crosses and begins to return the other letters to the first bag.*)

LOUVOIS (*starting as he picks up a letter whose handwriting he recognizes*).—Ha! it was hardly necessary to open this one.

KING.—Which, Louvois? Whose is it? (*Louvois hands the letter forward and the king starts as his eyes fall on it.*) Madame's writing!

LOUVOIS.—Yes, it is to her nephew in Germany. (*The king takes it in his hands, then suddenly throws it down, but his hand steals out to it. He is terribly agitated.*)

KING (*fingering nervously the letter and finally tossing it to his minister*).—Read it to me.

LOUVOIS (*with a malicious light in his eyes, flattening out the letter and reading*).—"My dear nephew, what you ask

me in your last is absolutely impossible. I have never abused the king's favor so far as to ask for any profit for myself, and I should be equally sorry to solicit any advance for my relatives. No one would rejoice more than I to see you rise to be a major in your regiment, but your valor and your loyalty must be the cause, and you must not hope to do it through any word of mine. To serve such a man as the king is its own reward, and I am sure that whether you remain a cornet or rise to some higher rank, you will be equally zealous in his cause. He is surrounded, unhappily, by many base parasites. Some of these are mere fools, like Lauzun; others are knaves, like the late Fouquet; and some seem to be both fools and knaves, like Louvois, the Minister of War." (*Louvois chokes with rage and cannot continue, but sits gurgling and drumming with his fingers on the table.*)

KING (*smiling*).—Go on, Louvois, go on.

LOUVOIS.—"These are the clouds which surround the sun, my dear nephew; but the sun is, believe me, shining brightly behind them. For years I have known that noble nature as few others can know it, and I can tell you that his virtues are his own, but that if ever his glory is for an instant dimmed over, it is because his kindness of heart has allowed him to be swayed by those who are about him. We hope soon to see you back at Versailles, staggering under the weight of your laurels. Meanwhile accept my love and every wish for your speedy promotion, although it cannot be obtained in the way which you suggest."

KING (*with love in his eyes*).—Ah, how could I for an instant doubt her! And yet I had been so shaken by the others. Françoise is as true as steel. Was it not a beautiful letter, Louvois?

LOUVOIS (*dubiously*).—Madame is a very clever woman.

KING.—And such a reader of hearts! Has she not seen my character aright?

LOUVOIS.—At least she has not read mine, sire.

A rap at the door and BONTEMS *enters.*

BONTEMS.—The Archbishop has arrived, sire.

KING.—Very well, Bontems. Ask Madame to be so good as to step this way. And order the witnesses to assemble in the anteroom. (*Bontems hurries away and the King turns to Louvois.*) I wish you to be one of the witnesses, Louvois.

LOUVOIS.—To what, sire?

KING.—To my marriage.

LOUVOIS (*starting*).—What, sire, already?

KING.—Now, Louvois; within five minutes.

LOUVOIS (*extremely disconcerted*).—Very good, sire.

KING.—Put these letters away, Louvois. The last one has made up for all the rest. But these rascals shall smart for it, all the same. By the way, there is that young nephew to whom madame wrote. Gérard d'Aubigny is his name, is it not?

LOUVOIS.—Yes, sire.

KING.—Make him out a colonel's commission, and give him the next vacancy, Louvois.

LOUVOIS.—A colonel, sire! Why, he is not yet twenty.

KING.—Ay, Louvois. Pray, am I the chief of the army, or are you? Take care, Louvois. I have warned you once before. I tell you, man, that if I choose to promote one of my jack-boots to be the head of a brigade, you shall not hesitate to make out the papers. Now go into the anteroom, (*He indicates a room on one side of the platform.*) and wait with the other witnesses until you are wanted. (*He goes out on the other side. Louvois takes the bags of letters off to the anteroom.*)

THE CHALLENGE.

CHARACTERS.

Bob Acres, *a perfect coward, from the country.*

Sir Lucius O' Trigger, *an Irish gentleman with a delicate sense of honor.*

Captain Absolute, *a friend of* ACRES, *in Bath under the name of* ENSIGN BEVERLEY.

David, *an old servant to* ACRES.

Another servant.

Situation.—SIR LUCIUS *plays on the feelings of* BOB ACRES *until a challenge is written to* ENSIGN BEVERLEY. *Unwittingly* ACRES *gets* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *to deliver this note. The most ludicrous scene is that in the King's Mead fields, whither* SIR LUCIUS *has at length dragged the unwilling* ACRES.

The strength of this dialogue lies in showing the sham courage, the indomitable cowardice of ACRES, *and the cool carelessness of* SIR LUCIUS.

SIR LUCIUS *speaks with an Irish brogue, and* DAVID *has a broad English accent. Considerable ingenuity may be displayed in arranging appropriate costumes.*

Scene I.

Lodgings of BOB ACRES. *A table with writing material stands at one side. Enter* ACRES *with a dancing step.*

ACRES.—Sink, slide—Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I——

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.—Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

ACRES.—Show him in. (*Servant goes out.*)

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

SIR LUCIUS.—Mr. Acres, I am delighted to see you.

ACRES.—My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

ACRES.—'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last!—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

ACRES.—Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

SIR LUCIUS.—Very ill, upon my conscience!—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

ACRES.—Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds, slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

SIR LUCIUS.—A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

ACRES.—Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

SIR LUCIUS.—Then sure you know what is to be done.

ACRES.—Not I, upon my soul!

SIR LUCIUS.—We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

ACRES.—What! fight him?

SIR LUCIUS.—Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

ACRES.—But he has given me no provocation.

SIR LUCIUS.—Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

ACRES.—Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

SIR LUCIUS.—That's no argument at all—he has the less right, then, to take such a liberty.

ACRES.—'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valor in him, and not know it.—But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

SIR LUCIUS.—What the devil signifies right when your honor is concerned? Do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad sword, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

ACRES.—Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching.—I certainly do feel a kind of valor arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

SIR LUCIUS.—Ah, my little friend! If we had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven, our honor and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

ACRES.—Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!—every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls

and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!—Zounds! as the man in the play says, 'I could do such deeds'——

SIR LUCIUS.—Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

ACRES.—I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. (*Sits.*) I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand however.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, compose yourself. (*Sits down.*)

ACRES.—Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—"Sir,——"

ACRES.—That's too civil, by half.

SIR LUCIUS.—"To prevent the confusion that might arise——"

ACRES.—Well——

SIR LUCIUS.—"From our both addressing the same lady——"

ACRES.—Ay—"both undressing the same lady"—there's the reason—"same lady"—Well——

SIR LUCIUS.—"I shall expect the honor of your company——"

ACRES.—Zounds! I'm not asking him to dinner!

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, be easy.

ACRES.—Well, then, "honor of your company"—Does company begin with a C or a K?

SIR LUCIUS.—"To settle our pretensions——"

ACRES.—Well.

SIR LUCIUS.—Let me see—ay, King's Mead fields will do —"in King's Mead fields."

ACRES.—So, that's done—Well, I'll fold it up presently, my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

SIR LUCIUS.—You see, now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

ACRES.—Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

SIR LUCIUS.—Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening, if you can; then, let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

ACRES.—Very true.

SIR LUCIUS.—So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening. (*He goes out.*)

ACRES (*with a shake of his head*).—By my valor, I should like to see him fight. Odds life, I should like to see him kill a man, if it was only to get a little lesson! (*He goes out.*)

Scene II

The same room. Enter ACRES, *disconsolately, pursued by* DAVID. ACRES *sits by the table.*

DAVID.—Then, by the mass, sir, I would do no such thing! Ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight, when I wasn't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say, when she hears o't?

ACRES.—But my honor, David, my honor! I must be very careful of my honor.

DAVID.—Ay, by the mass, and I would be very careful of it, and I think in return, my honor could not do less than to be very careful of me.

ACRES.—Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honor.

DAVID.—I say, then, it would be but civil in honor never to risk the loss of a gentleman. Look ye, master, this honor seems to me to be a marvelous false friend. Put the case: I was the gentleman, (which, thank heaven, no one can say of me;) well—my honor makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance. So, we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it? Why, my honor. But put the case, that he kills me! By the mass! I go to the worms, and my honor whips over to my enemy.

ACRES.—No, David; in that case, odds crowns and laurels! your honor follows you to the grave.

DAVID.—Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

ACRES.—Zounds! David, you are a coward! It doesn't become my valor to listen to you. What, shall I disgrace my ancestors? Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

DAVID.—Under favor, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye, now, master; to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

ACRES.—But, David, now, you don't think there is such very—very—great danger, hey? Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done.

DAVID.—By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you! Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his villainous double-barreled swords and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to

think on't — those be such desperate, bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide them! from a child I never could fancy them. I suppose there ain't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

ACRES.—Zounds! I won't be afraid! Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid. Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

DAVID.—Ay, in the name of mischief, let him be the messenger. For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it, for the best horse in your stable. By the mass, it don't look like another letter! It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter, and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch. Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off.

ACRES.—Out, you poltroon!—you haven't the valor of a grasshopper.

DAVID.—Well, I say no more: 'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall, but I ha' done. How Phyllis will howl when she hears of it! Ay, poor dog, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after! And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honor, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born. (*Whimpering.*)

ACRES.—It won't do, David—I am determined to fight, so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Captain Absolute, sir.

ACRES.—Oh, show him up. (*Servant goes out.*)

DAVID.—Well, heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

ACRES.—What's that? Don't provoke me, David!

DAVID.—Good-by, master. (*Sobbing.*)

ACRES.—Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven! (*David goes out.*)

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—What's the matter, Bob?

ACRES.—A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valor of St. George, and the dragon to boot——

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—But what did you want with me, Bob?

ACRES.—Oh!—there—(*Gives him the challenge.*)

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE (*reads*).—"*To Ensign Beverley.*"—(*Aside*). So—what's going on now?—(*Aloud.*) Well, what's this?

ACRES.—A challenge.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

ACRES.—Egad, but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—But what have I to do with this?

ACRES.—Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

ACRES.—Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

ACRES.—You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—you couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Why, no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

ACRES.—Well, then, I must get my friend, Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—I'll come down instantly. (*Servant goes out.*) Well, my little hero, success attend you. (*Going.*)

ACRES.—Stay, stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—To be sure, I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

ACRES.—Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—I will; I will; I'll say you are called, in the country, "Fighting Bob."

ACRES.—Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life, if I clear my honor.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—No!—that's very kind of you.

ACRES.—Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey? (*Going.*)

ACRES.—True, true.—But stay,—stay, Jack—you may add that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—I will, I will.

ACRES.—Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Ay, ay, "Fighting Bob." (*He goes out.*

ACRES (*shaking his head and gritting his teeth*).—Oh, yes! a determined dog! (*He goes out on other side.*)

Scene III.

King's Mead Fields. Enter SIR LUCIUS *and* ACRES, *with pistols.*

ACRES.—By my valor, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims! I say it is a good distance.

SIR LUCIUS.—It is for muskets or small field-pieces; upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me. Stay, now, I'll show you. (*Measures paces along the stage.*) There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

ACRES.—Zounds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

SIR LUCIUS.—Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

ACRES.—No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards——

SIR LUCIUS.—Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

ACRES.—Odds bullets, no! by my valor, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot; a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me, now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

ACRES.—I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understand——

SIR LUCIUS.—Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

ACRES.—A quietus!

SIR LUCIUS.—For instance, now, if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled, and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

ACRES.—Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

SIR LUCIUS.—I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before.

ACRES.—No, Sir Lucius, never before.

SIR LUCIUS.—Ah, that's a pity—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

ACRES.—Odds files! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there! (*He puts himself into a very awkward attitude.*) A side-front, eh?—Odd, I'll make myself small enough—I'll stand edgeways.

SIR LUCIUS.—Now, you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim—(*He levels his pistol at him.*)

ACRES.—Zounds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

SIR LUCIUS.—Never fear.

ACRES (*shivering*).—But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

SIR LUCIUS (*speaks in a very easy, careless tone*).—Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part on your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

ACRES.—A vital part!

SIR LUCIUS (*crosses to him*).—But there—fix yourself so—(*He places him.*) Let him see the broadside of your full front—there—now, a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

ACRES (*shrinking away*).—Clean through me! A ball or two clean through me!

SIR LUCIUS.—Ay, may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

ACRES.—Look ye, Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valor! I will stand edgeways.

SIR LUCIUS (*looking at his watch*).—Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—ah! no, faith—I think I see them coming.

ACRES.—Hey!—what!—coming?

SIR LUCIUS.—Ay, who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

ACRES.—There are two of them, indeed!—well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we-we-we-we—won't run.

SIR LUCIUS.—Run!

ACRES.—No, I say—we won't run, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS.—What the devil's the matter with you?

ACRES.—Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

SIR LUCIUS.—Oh, fie! consider your honor.

ACRES.—Ay, true, my honor—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honor.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, here they're coming. (*Looking.*)

ACRES.—Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you, I should almost think I was afraid—if my valor should leave me! valor will come and go.

SIR LUCIUS.—Then, pray, keep it fast while you have it.

ACRES.—Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valor is certainly going! it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

SIR LUCIUS.—Your honor—your honor!—Here they are.

ACRES.—Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND *and* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

SIR LUCIUS.—Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what, Captain Absolute! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account?

ACRES.—What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame you saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley (*To Faulkland,*) if you choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

FAULKLAND.—My weapons, sir!

ACRES.—Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

SIR LUCIUS.—What, sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

FAULKLAND.—Not I, upon my word, sir!

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Oh, pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

FAULKLAND.—Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter——

ACRES.—No, no, Mr. Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no

occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir Lucius.—Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with! You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres.—Why, no, Sir Lucius; I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face. If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly.

Captain Absolute.—Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir Lucius.—Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity——

Acres.—What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute!—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me so unnatural!

Sir Lucius.—Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valor has oozed away with a vengeance!

Acres.—Not in the least! odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall, or anything of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir Lucius.—Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres.—Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, sir?

ACRES.—Lookye, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—Coward may be said in a joke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls!——

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, sir?

ACRES.—I should have thought you a very ill-bred man, but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all. (*He goes out. The others salute each other and file off.*)

THE HOMELESS OLD MAN.

Adapted from "The Bondman," by Hall Caine.

CHARACTERS.

Adam Fairbroth *a benevolent old man.*

Asher, Ross, Thurstan, Jacob, John, *his sons,—farmers.*

Chalse A'Killey, *old faithful servant to* ADAM.

Ruth Fairbrother, *miserly, unaffectionate wife of* ADAM.

Greeba Fairbrother, *beautiful, loving daughter to* ADAM.

Situation.—*The scene is laid in the Isle of Man.* ADAM FAIRBROTHER *has just been superseded in the governor-generalship of the isle. His generosity while in office has left him penniless. Even his ancestral home he has given by deed to his miserly wife, who lives on the estate with the sons, lazy, worthless fellows. A stranger,* MICHAEL SUNLOCKS, *has taken the sons' place in the father's heart, and he has also won the affections of* GREEBA, *and now seeks his fortune in Iceland. In* SUNLOCK'S *absence,* JASON ORRY *lays unsuccessful siege to her heart.* ADAM, *in his penury, returns to his old home for protection but meets with the following reception.*

MRS. FAIRBROTHER *is sitting on one side of the platform front, knitting. Enter behind her* ADAM, *who takes a seat by the fireplace opposite;* GREEBA *follows and stands back of his chair;* CHALSE *shambles into the rear, scratching vacantly his uncovered head.*

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*drawing herself up and holding back her skirts*).—And pray, what ill wind blows you here?

ADAM.—An ill wind indeed, Ruth, for it is the wind of adversity. You must have heard of our misfortune, since the whole island knows of it. Well, it is not for me to complain, for God shapes our ways and He knows what is best. But I am an old man now, Ruth, little able to look to myself, still less to another, and——

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*tapping with her foot on the floor*).—Cut it short, sir. What do you want?

ADAM (*with stupefied look but quietly*).—I want to come home, Ruth.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*sharply*).—Home! And what home, if you please?

ADAM (*with a momentary struggle*).—What home, Ruth? Why, what home but this?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—This indeed! This is not your home.

ADAM (*dropping back into his seat, dumfounded*).—Not my home! (*Suddenly bracing up.*) Not my home! Did you say this was not my home? Why, woman, I was born here; so was my father before me, and my father's father before him. Five generations of my people have lived and died here, and the very roof rafters over your head must know us.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Hoity-toity! and if you had lived here much longer not a rafter of them all would have been left to shelter us. No, sir. I've kept the roof on this house, and it is mine.

ADAM (*slowly*).—It is yours, indeed, for I gave it you.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—You gave it me! Say I took it as my right when all that you had was slipping through your fingers like sand, as everything does that ever touches them.

ADAM (*drawing himself up with dignity*).—There is one thing that has indeed slipped through my fingers like sand, and that is the fidelity of the woman who swore before God forty and odd years ago to love and honor me.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Crinkleum-crankum! A pretty thing, truly, that I should toil and moil at my age to keep house and home together, ready and waiting for you, when your zany doings have shut every other door against you. Misfortunes, indeed! A fine name for your mistakes!

ADAM.—I may have made mistakes, madam, but true it is, as the wise man has said, that he who has never made mistakes has never made anything.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Tush!

ADAM.—Ruth, do you refuse to take me in?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—This house is mine, mine by law and deed, as tight as wax can make it.

ADAM (*rising to his feet*).—Do you refuse to take me in?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—You have brought ruin on yourself by your shilly-shally and vain folly, and now you think to pat your nose and say your prayers by my fireside.

ADAM.—Ruth, do you refuse to take me in?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Yes, and that I do. You would beggar me as you have beggared yourself, but that I warrant you never shall. (*Grim silence for a moment.*)

ADAM (*gripping his staff convulsively*).—God give me patience. Yes, I'll bear it meekly. Ruth, I'll not trouble you. Make yourself sure of that. While there's a horse-wallet to hang on my old shoulders, and a bit of barley-bread to put in it, I'll rove the country round, but I'll never come on my knees to you and say, "I am your husband, I gave you all you had, and you are rich and I'm a beggar, and I am old—give me for charity my bed and board."—(*He gives way to wrath*) Out on you, woman! Out on

you! God forgive me the evil day I set eyes on you! God forgive me the damned day I took you to my breast to rend it!

GREEBA (*she has silently watched with quivering eyelashes and clenched fingers, and now steps forward*).—Forgive him, mother. Do not be angry with him. He will be sorry for what he has said; I'm sure he will. But only think, dear mother; he is in great, great trouble, and he is past work, and if this is not his home, then he is homeless.

ADAM (*dropping back into his chair and weeping*).—I am not ashamed of my tears, child, but they are not shed for myself. Nor did I come here for my own sake, though your mother thinks I did. No, child, no; say no more. I'll repent me of nothing I have said to her—no, not a word. She is a hard, cruel woman; but, thank heaven, I have my sons left to me yet. She is not flesh of my flesh, though one with me in wedlock; but they are, and they will never see their father turned from the door.

Enter three sons, ASHER, ROSS, *and* THURSTAN.

This is not your will, Asher?

ASHER.—I do not know what you mean, sir.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*her apron to her eyes*).—He has damned your mother and cursed the day he married her.

ADAM.—But she is turning me out of the house. This house—my father's house.

ASHER.—Ask her pardon, sir, and she will take you back.

ADAM.—Her pardon! God in heaven!

THURSTAN.—You are an old man, now, sir.

ADAM.—So I am; so I am.

THURSTAN.—And you are poor as well.

ADAM.—That's true, Thurstan; that's true, though your brother forgets it.

THURSTAN.—So you should not hold your head too high.

ADAM.—What! Are you on her side, also? Asher, Thurstan, Ross, you are my sons—would you see me turned out of the house?

ASHER (*all three hang their heads*).—What mother says he must agree to.

ADAM.—But I gave you all I had. If I am old I am your father, and if I am poor you know best who made me so.

THURSTAN.—We are poor, too, sir; we have nothing, and we do not forget who is to blame for it.

ROSS.—You gave everything away from us; and because your bargain is a rue bargain, you want us now to stand aback of you.

Enter JACOB *and* JOHN.

JACOB (*sneeringly*).—Ah, yes, and who took the side of a stranger against his own children? What of your good Michael Sunlocks, now, sir? Is he longing for you? Or have you never had the scribe of a line from him since he turned his back on you, four years ago?

GREEBA (*angrily, with flashing eyes*).—For shame, for shame! Oh, you mean, pitiful men, to bait and badger him like this. (*Jacob laughs.*)

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Chut, girl, you're waxing apace with your big words, considering you're a chit that has wasted her days in London and hasn't learned to muck a byre yet.

ADAM (*stunned*).—Not for myself, no, not for myself, though they all think it. (*To his sons.*) You think I came to beg for bed and board for myself, you are wrong. I came to demand it for the girl. I may have no claim upon you, but she has, for she is one with you all and can ask for her own. She has no home with her father now, for it

seems that he has none for himself; but her home is here, and here I mean to leave her.

JOHN.—Not so fast, sir. All she can ever claim is what may one day be hers when we ourselves come into anything. Meantime, like her brothers, she has nothing but what she works for.

ADAM.—Works for, you wagtail? She is a woman! Do you hear? A woman!

JOHN (*snapping his fingers*).—Woman or man, where's the difference here?

ADAM.—Where's the difference, you jackanapes? Do you ask me where's the difference here? Here? In grace, in charity, in unselfishness, in faith in the good, in fidelity to the true, in filial love and duty! There's the difference, you jackanapes.

JOHN.—You are too old to quarrel with, sir. I will spare you.

ADAM.—Spare me, you whippersnapper! *You* will spare *me!* But, oh, let me have patience! If I have cursed the day I first saw my wife, let me not also curse the hour when she first bore children, and my heart was glad. Asher, you are my first-born, and heaven knows what you were to me. You will not stand by and listen to this. She is your sister, my son. Think of it,—your only sister.

ASHER (*indifferently*).—The girl is nothing to me. She is nothing to any of us. She has been with you all the days of her life, except such as you made her to spend with strangers. She is no sister of ours.

ADAM (*to Ross*).—And do you say the same?

ROSS.—What can she do here? Nothing. This is no place for your great ladies. We work here, every man and woman of us, from daylight to dark, in the fields and in the dairy. Best send her back to her fine friends in London.

JACOB (*smiling into Greeba's face*).—Ay, or marry her straight off—that is the shortest way. I heard a little bird tell of some one who might have her. Don't look astonished, Miss, for I make no doubt you know who it is. He is away on the mountains now, but he'll be home before long.

ADAM (*struggling with his emotion*).—If she is not your sister, at least she is your mother's daughter, and a mother knows what that means. (*He turns to Mrs. Fairbrother.*) Ruth, the child is your daughter, and by that deed you speak of, she is entitled to her share of all that is here——

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*sharply*).—Yes, but only when I am done with it.

ADAM.—Even so, would you see the child want before that, or drive her into any marriage, no matter what?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*deliberately*).—I will take her on one condition.

ADAM.—What is it, Ruth? Name it, that I may grant it.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—That you shall give up all control of her, and that she shall give up all thought of you.

ADAM.—What?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—That you shall never again expect to see her or hear from her, or hold commerce of any kind with her.

ADAM.—But why? Why?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Because I may have certain plans for her future welfare that you might try to spoil.

ADAM.—Do they concern Michael Sunlocks?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—No, indeed.

ADAM.—Then, they concern young Jason, the Icelander.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—If so, it is *my* concernment.

ADAM.—And that is your condition?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Yes.

ADAM.—And you ask me to part from her, forever? Think

of it, she is my only daughter. She has been the light of my eyes. You have never loved her as I have loved her. You know it is the truth. And you ask me to see her no more, and never more to hear from her. Now, God punish you for this, you cold-hearted woman!

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Take care, sir. Fewer words, or mayhap I will recall my offer. If you are wise you will be calm for the girl's sake.

ADAM (*dropping his head*).—You are right. It is not for me to take the bread out of my child's mouth. She shall choose for herself. (*He twists round in his chair and looks up at her.*) Greeba, my darling, you see how it is. I am old and very poor, and heaven pity my blind folly. I have no home to offer you, for I have none to shelter my own head. Don't fear for me, for I have no fear for myself. I will be looked to in the few days that remain to me and come what may, the sorry race of my foolish life will soon be over. But you have made no mistakes that merit my misfortunes. So choose, my child, choose. It is poverty with me or plenty with your mother. Choose, my child, choose; and let it be quickly, let it be quickly, for my old heart is bursting.

GREEBA (*drawing herself up proudly*).—Choose? There is no choice. I will go with my father, and follow him over the world, though we have no covering but the skies above us.

ADAM (*leaping from his chair in joy*).—Do you hear that, you people? There's grace and charity, and unselfishness, and love left in the world still. Thank heaven, I have not yet to curse the day her body brought forth children. Come, Greeba, we will go our ways, and God's protection will go with us. "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging

bread." (*He strides across the platform to the door he entered, stops and looks back at the group of his sons.*) And you, you unnatural sons, I cast you out of my mind. I give you up to your laziness and drunkenness and vain pleasures. I am going to one who is not flesh of my flesh, and yet he is my son indeed. (*He starts out, but again turns and faces his wife.*) As for you, woman, your time will come. Remember that! Remember that!

GREEBA (*laying a hand on his shoulder*).—Come, father, come.

ADAM (*again turning back*).—Farewell, all of you! Farewell! You will see me no more. May a day like this that has come to your father never, never come to you. (*He breaks down, reels, and Greeba helps him out, while he sobs out the following apostrophe.*) Sunlocks, my boy; Sunlocks, I am coming to you—I am coming to you. (*He goes out with Greeba.*)

CHALSE (*muttering*).—Strange, the near I was to crucifying the Lord afresh and swearing a mortal swear, only I remembered my catechism and the good John Wesley. (*He goes out.*)

CURTAIN.

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS.

Adapted from "The Last Days of Pompeii," by Bulwer Lytton.

CHARACTERS.

Glaucus, *a handsome, graceful and rich Greek.*

Ione, *a brilliant and beautiful young woman, born in Naples of Greek parents.*

The Witch, *an old wrinkled, weather-beaten hag, bent and lame.*

Situation.—GLAUCUS *has taken* IONE *on a little journey and on the return they are overtaken by a violent storm not far from the* WITCH'S *cavern. They hurry into this gloomy place, where the* WITCH *questions them and curses them.*

On one side is a fire with a small cauldron over it. Herbs and weeds are hung in lines to dry. The fire gives a weird light on the face of the hag. There is a fox couching by the fire, and a heap of sculls of animals in the corner.

GLAUCUS *and* IONE *must enter in garments spattered with rain and mud. The snake need not be real or apparent. It will be sufficient for all three actors to imagine it present.*

The WITCH *is seated before the fire with dried weeds heaped at her feet. She sorts weeds and stirs the cauldron.*

WITCH.—Years ago I was not the thing that I am now.

I loved and I fancied I was beloved. Another and less fair than I—yes, by Nemesis! less fair—allured my chosen from me. We all in my dark Etrurian tribe knew the secrets of the gloomier Magic. My mother, too, she was a Saga. O mother, you shared the resentment of thy child. You, even you, gave me the poison that was to destroy my rival. Oh, crush me, dread walls, that my trembling hands should mistake the phials and I should see my lover indeed at my feet, but dead! dead!—What has life been to me since? How suddenly I became old! How long I have given myself to these sorceries of my race! Still by an irresistible impulse I curse myself; still I seek the most noxious herbs; still I concoct poisons; still I imagine that I am to give them to my hated rival; still I pour them into the phial; still I fancy that they shall blast her beauty to the dust; still I wake and see the quivering body, the foaming lips, the glazing eyes of my Aulus,—murdered, and by me! (*She shudders and shakes from head to foot and then she sits very still.*)

Enter GLAUCUS *and* IONE. *They stand by the door.*

GLAUCUS.—It is a dead thing.

IONE (*faltering and clinging to him*).—Nay it stirs,—it is a ghost or——

WITCH (*in a hollow and ghostly tone*).—Who are ye? And what do ye here?

GLAUCUS (*drawing Ione farther into cavern*).—We are storm-beaten wanderers from the neighboring city, and decoyed hither by your light; we crave shelter and the comfort of your hearth.

WITCH.—Come to the fire if ye will. I never welcome living thing, save the owl, the fox, the toad and the viper, so I cannot welcome ye; but come to the fire without welcome; why stand upon form? (*She relapses into her*

profound reverie. Glaucus takes off Ione's outer wraps and places a log for her to sit on near the fire.)

IONE.—We disturb you, I fear.

WITCH (*after a long pause*).—Tell me, are ye brother and sister?

IONE (*blushing*).—No.

WITCH.—Are ye married?

GLAUCUS.—Not so.

WITCH.—Ho, lovers! ha! ha! ha! (*She laughs long and loud.*)

GLAUCUS (*after muttering a counter spell*).—Why dost thou laugh, old crone?

WITCH (*absently*).—Did I laugh?

GLAUCUS (*to Ione, in a low tone*).—She is in her dotage.

WITCH (*she has heard the words and has caught his eye*).—Thou liest!

GLAUCUS.—Thou art an uncourteous welcomer.

IONE (*to Glaucus*).—Hush! provoke her not, dear Glaucus!

WITCH.—I will tell thee why I laughed when I discovered ye were lovers. It was because it is a pleasure to the old and withered to look upon young hearts like yours and to know the time will come when you will loathe each other,—loathe—loathe—ha! ha! ha!

IONE.—The gods forbid! yet poor woman, thou knowest little of love or thou wouldst know that it never changes.

WITCH (*quickly*).—Was I young once, think ye, and am I old and hideous and deathly now? Such as is the form so is the heart. (*She sinks again into a profound stillness.*)

GLAUCUS (*after a pause*).—Hast thou dwelt here long?

WITCH.—Ah, long!—yes!

GLAUCUS.—It is but a drear abode.

WITCH.—Ha! thou mayst well say that. Hell is beneath

us! (*She points to the earth.*) And I will tell thee a secret: the dim things below are preparing wrath for ye above,—you, the young, and the thoughtless, and the beautiful.

GLAUCUS.—Thou utterest but evil words, ill becoming the hospitable, and in future I will brave the tempest rather than thy welcome.

WITCH.—Thou wilt do well. None should ever seek me, save the wretched.

GLAUCUS.—And why the wretched?

WITCH (*with a grin*).—I am the witch of the mountain. My trade is to give hope to the hopeless. For the crossed in love I have philtres; for the avaricious, promises of treasure; for the malicious, potions of revenge; for the happy and the good, I have only what life has,—curses! (*She turns away.*) Trouble me no more.

GLAUCUS (*turns to Ione who is seated, drops on his knee, seizes her hand and says tenderly*).—Ione! Ione!

IONE (*suddenly, seeing a snake emerge from the dry roots on the floor, shrieks and seizes Glaucus*).—Oh! Glaucus, look.

GLAUCUS (*seizing a half-burned stick to beat off the snake*).—Witch, command thy creature, or thou wilt see it dead.

WITCH (*quickly aroused*).—It has been despoiled of its venom. (*Glaucus watches the snake which rises up to strike at him, and before he has caught the meaning of the Witch's words, hits the snake so hard a blow on the head that it falls writhing to the floor. The Witch springs up with a face full of wrath.*) Thou hast had shelter under my roof, and warmth at my hearth; thou hast returned evil for good; thou hast smitten and haply slain the thing that loved me and was mine: nay more, the creature above

all others consecrated to gods, and deemed venerable by man; now hear thy punishment. By the moon, who is the guardian of the sorceress, by Orcus, who is the treasurer of wrath, I curse thee, and thou art cursed! May thy love be blasted, may thy name be blackened, may the Infernals mark thee, may thy heart wither and scorch, may thy last hour recall to thee the prophet voice of the Sage of Vesuvius! (*She turns to Ione.*) And thou——

GLAUCUS.—Hag! forbear! Me thou hast cursed and I commit myself to the gods. I defy and scorn thee. But breathe but one word against yon maiden, and I will convert the oath on thy foul lips to thy dying groan. Beware!

WITCH (*laughing wildly*).—I have done, for in thy doom is she who loves thee accursed. And not the less, that I heard *her* lips breathe thy name, and know by what word to commend thee to the demons. *Glaucus*, thou art doomed! (*She turns from them, drops on her knees and searches for the wounded snake, paying no attention to them.*)

IONE (*greatly terrified*).—O Glaucus! what have we done? Let us hasten from this place. The storm has ceased.—Good mistress, forgive him; recall thy words; he meant but to defend himself; accept this peace-offering to unsay the said. (*She puts her purse in the Witch's lap.*)

WITCH (*bitterly*).—Away! away! The oath once woven the Fates only can untie. Away!

GLAUCUS (*impatiently*).—Come, dearest! Thinkest thou that the gods above us or below hear the impotent ravings of dotage? Come! (*The Witch laughs long and loud. Glaucus and Ione go out.*)

CURTAIN

HIS ENEMY'S HONOR.

CHARACTERS.

MacPherson, *a very powerful Scot with some Scotch plaid apparent.*

MacPhail, Bruce, Drummond, *friends of* MACPHERSON.

Sinclair, *a young man of a different clan from the rest and of half drunken frenzy. He wears a different Scotch plaid from* MACPHERSON'S.

Situation.—*In a drunken quarrel between two groups from different clans* SINCLAIR *has killed a man and rushes off for safety. Hardly himself he does not recognize the house of his bitter enemy and stumbles into the room where the following scene takes place.*

There should be an entrance from each side of the platform, and a stout club near the door from which MACPHERSON *comes.*

Enter SINCLAIR *in great confusion.*

SINCLAIR.—What, ho! Who hears? A stranger claims a refuge! Refuge and help! Is no one in the house? (*To himself.*) 'Twas a hot chase—but I have distanced them! My brain still whirls—the wine is not yet out. What have I done, O, fatal, fatal frenzy! Now it comes back—the dire reality! O, irretrievable and utter wreck Of all my hopes, made in one drunken moment! This morning rich in all that graces life,

And now—a miserable homicide,
A hunted fugitive!

Enter MACPHERSON *from the other side of the platform.*

MACPHERSON.—A stranger here?
I knew not any one was in the room.
Did no one wait upon you?
SINCLAIR.—No. I entered
By stealth one of the windows in the basement,
And made my way unchallenged to this room.
I am pursued—my life is in your hands—
I throw myself for shelter on your mercy!
MACPHERSON.—Pursued? For what? No crime, I hope?
SINCLAIR.—No crime,
Premeditate in act or in intent—
Nothing to stain my honor;—yet a deed
To blacken all my future—ay, to make it
One long sigh of repentance! At a tavern,
A few miles off, a party of us stopped
And dined. The wine flashed freely. We partook
More than our brains could carry. Up there came
Another party of young men, elated,
Like us, with wine. Quick wakener of contention,
Politics grew the theme—high words ensued—
The lie was given—a blow—a fatal blow!—
Was struck—and I the giver! the receiver
Fell backward—hit the curb-stone with his neck—
Rose—staggered—dropped—and died!
MACPHERSON.—Unhappy chance!
SINCLAIR.—When the appalling fear that I had killed him
Grew to conviction, I stood motionless
And mute with horror. Then a cry of *Vengeance!*

Broke from his friends. Mine, overpowered, urged me
To fly. I ran, scarce knowing how or why,—
But, with such speed, I soon left my pursuers
Far out of sight. At length I reached this house,
And here I stand your suppliant.

MacPherson.—Your reliance
Shall not be disappointed. On my hearth
You stand, a sacred guest. Let that suffice.
Why do you start?

Sinclair.—Because your tartan tells me,
My foes are of your clan.

MacPherson.—And what of that?
Did a Macgregor ever yet betray
Or friend or foe? Did a disloyal host
Ever yet bear our name? Fear not. Your trust
Shall be respected. If I heard aright,
The deed was one of passion, not of malice.

Sinclair.—O, not of malice—not of brooding malice!
But momentary anger—anger, that,
Quick as the lightning, was as quickly ended,
Leaving a desolation and regret!
O, in that fatal wine-cup there was melted
A pearl of price,—the relish of a life!
Never again the morning sunlight reddening
My window-pane shall wake a thrill of joy!
Never again the smile of innocence
Shall be reflected from these haggard lips!
That sad, appealing look my victim gave me,
In his last dying throe, will paint itself
On the void air, and make my memory
A funeral chamber for the dreadful image
Forever!

MacPherson.—I'll not try to blunt the edge

Of your great sorrow. 'T is a wholesome pain.
That man is less than man who can destroy
The sacred human life and feel no awe,
No swelling of compunction. I'd not trust him!
To time and to God's mercy I commit you.

(*An impatient knocking is heard outside of the house.*)

SINCLAIR (*listens*).—Hark! They have tracked me here!
They knock for entrance,
I hear their voices. Now the door is opened!
They're on the stairs. In their revenge and fury,
Attempt to stay them, they will dash you down.

MACPHERSON.—Enter that room. Whatever you may hear,
Be mute and do not stir. Fear not for me.

(SINCLAIR *goes out through the same door by which* MACPHERSON *entered.* *Enter* MACPHAIL *and* BRUCE.)

MACPHAIL.—He is not here!

BRUCE.—I know not that.—MacPherson,
A fugitive is sheltered in this house.
Deny it not. Show us his hiding-place.

MACPHERSON.—Unmannerly clown! And if a fugitive
Were here, am I the man to give him up
On such a summons? Master Archie Bruce
Go home, and bid your teachers keep you there
Till you can show a touch of gentle breeding
When you accost a gentleman.

MACPHAIL.—MacPherson,
You'll blame us not for our disdain of forms,
When you hear all. You'll readily give up
The miscreant when you learn he is the slayer
Of your own son—of Albert!

MACPHERSON.—No! No! No!

Albert MacPherson slain? A trick! A trick
To get possession of the fugitive!
To make me play the recreant—the traitor.

BRUCE.—So! He admits it! He admits the culprit
Is in this house!

MACPHERSON.—I admit nothing. Boy!
If what you say is true,—that he—my son—
Is slain—(and now the anguish at my heart
Confirms the direful blow)—is't not enough,
For one day's woe, that I'm bereft of *him*—
Would ye bereave me of my honor too?

MACPHAIL.—MacPherson, your own words betray the fact,
That here our man is harbored.
We must pass through this door. (*He goes toward the door through which Sinclair passed out.*)

MACPHERSON.—*Must* pass, MacPhail? Back—trifler! *Must*, indeed!
'T is a MacPherson you are dealing with.
Must is a word that he's not wont to hear
In his own house—or elsewhere.

MACPHAIL (*with stiff politeness*).—Then, MacPherson,
I pray you *suffer* us to pass. (*Bruce and MacPhail approach him as if to lay hands on him.*)

MACPHERSON (*seizing the club*).—Stand back! (*They fall back.*)
This is my house, and I am master of it.
Keep a respectful distance.

MACPHAIL.—Give us up
The wretch at once or we'll call in assistance.

MACPHERSON.—Then you shall know what desperation is,
And we'll have havoc. Would you madden me?

BRUCE.—The man you shelter is a murderer—

The murderer of your son! (*A pause.*)

MACPHAIL.—You hear, MacPherson?

MACPHERSON.—Were he the murderer of all my clan,—
If he had made my hearth a sanctuary,—
If I had given my word to shelter him,—
So help me, Heaven!—I'd perish, hacked in pieces,
Ere I would violate the sacred pledge!

Enter DRUMMOND.

DRUMMOND.—Where is the homicide?

BRUCE.—Concealed within,
As we believe. MacPherson bars our entrance.
A loving father, truly,
To try to screen the murderer of his son!

MACPHERSON.—What wouldst *thou* be? The murderer of my honor!
Reviler, mocker of a father's anguish,—
Think you I could have loved my son so well,
Carried I here the stuff traitors are made of?
Think you the bitterness of my bereavement
Sharp as it is, beyond your poor conception,
Could parallel the pang of treachery
In a true heart—in a MacPherson heart?

DRUMMOND.—You've done your best, MacPherson! On your head
No blame can fall. Away! and let us enter.
We must have life for life. Sinclair must die.

MACPHERSON.—Sinclair! You said *Sinclair?*

DRUMMOND.—The son and heir
Of your most deadly foe.

MACPHAIL.—We had forgot
To mention that. Now you'll not hesitate
To give him up.

MACPHERSON.—A double sanctity

Invests him now. If I had wavered, that
One mention had confirmed me.

DRUMMOND.—We waste time.

Enter we *must*—by soft means or by hard.

MACPHERSON.—Well, Master Drummond, enter if you dare!

Why do you wait? Why waste the time you grudge?

SINCLAIR *comes back.*

SINCLAIR.—From further parley I relieve you all!
MacPherson, I absolve you from your pledge.
Thanks for your noble dealing,—for the honor,
Stronger than vengeance, tenderer than love,
That would protect one who has thrown a blight
On all your joys——
Now, seekers of my life, come on and take it!
Be quick! Ye'll only ease me of a burden
My act has rendered hateful.

DRUMMOND.—Ho! Secure him!

MACPHERSON (*stepping in front of Sinclair*).—I'd like to see the rash one who will venture
To lay a finger, save in gentleness,
Upon this youth. Back! Tamperers with my honor!
Out of my house! That man who tarries longer
Is in great danger. Out of my house, I say! (*He brandishes the club and they all go out by the door they entered. He follows them to the door and then comes back to centre of platform, turns part round and buries his face in his hands.*)

SINCLAIR (*approaching MacPherson and kneeling*).—MacPherson, I am kneeling at your feet!——
Not for my *life*—O, not to thank you, sir,
For that poor boon which one ungoverned impulse

Has emptied of all value,—but in token
Of veneration for true nobleness,—
Of the prostration of my wretchedness,—
Of sympathy—of sorrow—of remorse!

MACPHERSON.—O, I am childless.

SINCLAIR (*rising*).—That thought is like a knife
In my own heart. Let there be expiation! (*He goes to the door his enemies just went out of and calls.*)
Drummond! MacPhail! Come, seize me!

MACPHERSON (*seizing him*).—Reckless boy!
Would you thus frustrate all my pains to save you?
Judge you so poorly of me as to think
I nurse a brute revenge that blood of yours
Alone can satisfy?—that my affliction
Such balm could mitigate?

SINCLAIR (*covering his face*).—O, let me die!

MACPHERSON.—No! Be a man—and live! Look up, Sinclair!
Hark! (*He goes and listens.*) I hear angry voices. Your pursuers
In thicker numbers crowd. They will be here
In half a minute. Come! This way lies safety.
They little know the secrets of my hold.
We'll foil them. Do not doubt it. You shall hide
Here in my house till I can guide you safely
To Inverary to your friends. Delay not.
Will you bring added woe upon my head?
Moments are precious. Come!

SINCLAIR.—One word from you,
And only one, shall from this spot uproot me,
And that word is *forgiveness!*

MACPHERSON.—I forgive you.
As I would be forgiven, I forgive you.

SINCLAIR (*giving him his hand*).—
Lead on, then, my preserver!
O, let my future tell how much you lift
From this despairing heart in that one word,—
You do *forgive* me!
Now guide me and bestow me as you will!
Henceforth, above all prayers, shall rise *this* prayer,
That I may live to comfort and requite you! (*They go out.*)

CLEOPATRA AND THE MESSENGER.

Adapted from Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra."

CHARACTERS.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, *dressed in flowing garments, and carrying a small dagger, concealed.*

Charmian, *chief attendant on* CLEOPATRA.

Iras, *another female attendant.*

Alexas, Mardian, *male attendants on the Queen.*

A Messenger from Rome.

Situation.—ANTONY *has hurried away on imperial matters to Rome, leaving* CLEOPATRA *very disconsolate. She has now gathered her attendants about her in a vain endeavor to pass the time without weariness.*

In this scene, CLEOPATRA *shows the most rapid and violent changes of emotion, all of which indicate her intense passion for the noble* ANTONY. CHARMIAN *and* MARDIAN *are the only attendants that speak, but the others must act, fanning* CLEOPATRA, *arranging her chair or couch, standing guard at the door, etc.* CLEOPATRA *ought to sit opposite the entrance and some distance from it; and the* MESSENGER *should do obeisance on entering, and approach very slowly.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS *and* ALEXAS.

CLEOPATRA.—Give me some music; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

ALL.—The music, ho!

Enter MARDIAN.

CLEOPATRA.—Let it alone; let's to billiards: come, Charmian.

CHARMIAN.—My arm is sore; best play with Mardian.

CLEOPATRA.—Come, you'll play with me, sir?

MARDIAN.—As well as I can, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—And when good-will is show'd, though't come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now:
Give me mine angle; we'll to the river; there,
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finn'd fishes; my bended hook shall pierce
Their shiny jaws, and as I draw them up,
I'll think them every one an Antony,
And say "Ah, ha! you're caught."

CHARMIAN.—'Twas merry when
You wagered on your angling; when your diver
Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

CLEOPATRA.—That time—O times!—
I laughed him out of patience, and that night
I laughed him into patience; and next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed;
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Oh, from Italy!
Ram thou thy frightful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.

MESSENGER.—Madam, madam——

CLEOPATRA.—Antonius dead! If thou say so, villain,

Thou kill'st thy mistress; but well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss; a hand that kings
Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing.

MESSENGER.—First, madam, he is well.

CLEOPATRA.—Why, there's more gold.
But, sirrah, mark we use
To say the dead are well; bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt and pour
Down thy ill-uttering throat.

MESSENGER.—Good madam, hear me.

CLEOPATRA.—Well, go to, I will;
But there's no goodness in thy face; if Antony
Be free and healthful,—so tart a favor
To trumpet such good tidings! If not well,
Thou shouldst come like a Fury crown'd with snakes,
Not like a formal man.

MESSENGER.—Will't please you hear me?

CLEOPATRA.—I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak'st:
Yet if thou say Antony lives, is well,
Or friends with Cæsar, or not captive to him,
I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail
Rich pearls upon thee.

MESSENGER.—Madam, he's well.

CLEOPATRA.—Well said.

MESSENGER.—And friends with Cæsar.

CLEOPATRA.—Thou'rt an honest man.

MESSENGER.—Cæsar and he are greater friends than ever.

CLEOPATRA.—Make thee a fortune from me.

MESSENGER.—But yet, madam,——

CLEOPATRA.—I do not like "But yet," it does allay
The good precedence; fie upon "But yet!"

"But yet" is as a gaoler to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together: he's friends with Cæsar,
In state of health, thou say'st, and thou say'st, free.

MESSENGER.—Free, madam! no; I made no such report;
He's bound unto Octavia.

CLEOPATRA (*turning away from him*).—I am pale, Charmian.

MESSENGER.—Madam, he's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.—The most infectious pestilence upon thee! (*She strikes him down.*)

MESSENGER.—Good madam, patience.

CLEOPATRA.—What say you? Hence. (*She strikes him again.*)
Horrible villain! or I'll spurn thine eyes
Like balls before me: I'll unhair thy head. (*She drags him up and down.*)
Thou shalt be whipped with wire and stewed in brine,
Smarting in lingering pickle.

MESSENGER.—Gracious madam, I that do bring the news made not the match.

CLEOPATRA.—Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee
And make thy fortunes proud; the blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage,
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.

MESSENGER.—He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—Rogue, thou hast lived too long. (*She draws a knife.*)

MESSENGER.—Nay, then I'll run.
What mean you, madam? I have made no fault. (*He runs out.*)

CHARMIAN.—Good madam, keep yourself within yourself.
The man is innocent.

CLEOPATRA.—Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.
Melt Egypt into Nile! and kindly creatures
Turn all to serpents! Call the slave again:
Though I am mad, I will not bite him: call. (*Charmian goes to the door and beckons in vain.*)

CHARMIAN.—He is afeard to come.

CLEOPATRA.—I will not hurt him. (*Charmian goes out.*)
These hands do lack nobility, that they strike
A meaner than myself; since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

Re-enter CHARMIAN *dragging in the Messenger.*

Come hither, sir.
Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news: give to a gracious message
An host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell
Themselves when they be felt.

MESSENGER.—I have done my duty.

CLEOPATRA.—Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worser than I do,
If thou again say "Yes."

MESSENGER.—He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—The gods confound thee! dost thou hold there still?

MESSENGER.—Should I lie, madam?

CLEOPATRA.—O, I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerged and made
A cistern for scaled snakes! Go, get thee hence:
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?

MESSENGER.—I crave your highness' pardon.

CLEOPATRA.—He is married?

MESSENGER.—Take no offense that I would not offend you:
To punish me for what you make me do
Seems much unequal: he's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.—O that his fault should make a knave of thee,
That art not what thou'rt sure of! Get thee hence:
The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome
Are all too dear for me: lie they upon thy hand
And be undone by 'em. (*Messenger goes out.*)

CHARMIAN.—Good your highness, patience.

CLEOPATRA.—In praising Antony, I have dispraised Cæsar.

CHARMIAN.—Many times, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—I am paid for't now.
Lead me from hence;
I faint: O Iras, Charmian! 'tis no matter,
Go to the fellow, good Alexas; bid him
Report the feature of Octavia, her years,
Her inclination; let him not leave out
The color of her hair: bring me word quickly. (*Alexas goes out.*)
Let him for ever go: let him not—Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way's a Mars. (*To Mardian.*) Bid you Alexas
Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber. (*They go out.*)

THE BISHOP'S SILVER CANDLESTICKS.

Adapted from Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables."

CHARACTERS.

Bishop Welcome, *a venerable, kind-hearted old man.*
Madame Magloire, *the* BISHOP'S *housekeeper.*
Jean Valjean, *an escaped convict of great strength.*
A Corporal of Police and three Officers.

Situation.—*The convict after searching in vain for a night's lodging has been received by the* BISHOP, *given supper and a bed. At three o'clock in the morning he rose, stole the* BISHOP'S *basket of silver plate and went away. The scene which follows is in the morning when the discovery of the robbery is made.* JEAN VALJEAN *is arrested and brought back, but is pardoned by the tender-hearted* BISHOP *and given two candlesticks in addition to what he has stolen.*

An empty basket for silver plate is lying on the floor. The BISHOP *enters slowly, picks it up and is walking on when* MADAME MAGLOIRE *rushes in.*

MADAME.—Monseigneur, monseigneur! does your Grandeur know where the plate-basket is?

BISHOP.—Yes.

MADAME.—The Lord be praised; I did not know what had become of it.

BISHOP.—Here it is. (*Hands it to her.*)

MADAME.—Well! there is nothing in it; where is the plate?

BISHOP.—Ah! it is the plate that troubles your mind. Well, I do not know where that is.

MADAME.—Good Lord! it is stolen, and that man who came last night is the robber. (*She rushes out, but soon hurries back and screams.*) Monseigneur, the man is gone! the plate is stolen! (*Her eyes fall on a corner of the garden.*) That is the way he went! He leaped into the lane! Oh, what an outrage! He has stolen our plate!

BISHOP (*after a moment's silence, raising earnest eyes*).—By the way, was that plate ours? (*Madame is speechless.*) Madame Magloire, I had wrongfully held back this silver, which belonged to the poor. Who was this person? Evidently a poor man.

MADAME.—Good gracious! I do not care for it, nor does Mademoiselle, but we feel for Monseigneur. With what will Monseigneur eat now?

BISHOP (*in amazement*).—Why! are there not pewter forks to be had?

MADAME (*with a shrug*).—Pewter smells.

BISHOP.—Then iron!

MADAME (*with a grimace*).—Iron tastes.

BISHOP.—Well, then—wood? (*He seems thoughtful.*)

MADAME (*to herself*).—What an idea! to receive a man like that and lodge him by one's side. And what a blessing it is that he only stole! Oh, Lord! the mere thought makes a body shudder. (*She goes out.*)

BISHOP (*in answer to a knock at the door*).—Come in. (*The corporal and three men enter holding another by the collar.*)

CORPORAL (*with a military salute*).—Monseigneur.

CONVICT (*to himself*).—Monseigneur, then he is not the curate.

OFFICER.—Silence! this gentleman is Monseigneur the Bishop.

BISHOP (*advancing with a look of pleasure*).—Ah! there

you are. I am glad to see you. Why, I gave you the candlesticks too, which are also of silver, and will fetch you two hundred francs. Why did you not take them away with the rest of the plate? (*A strange puzzled look comes over the countenance of the convict.*)

CORPORAL.—Monseigneur, what this man told us was true then? We met him, and as he looked as if he were running away, we arrested him. He had this plate——

BISHOP (*with a smile*).—And he told you that it was given to him by an old priest at whose house he passed the night? I see it all. And you brought him back here? That is a mistake.

CORPORAL.—In that case we can let him go?

BISHOP.—Of course. (*The officers loose their hold and Jean Valjean staggers back.*)

CONVICT (*in utter bewilderment*).—Is it true that I am at liberty?

AN OFFICER.—Yes, you are let go; don't you understand?

BISHOP.—My friend, before you go take your candlesticks. (*The old bishop goes to mantelpiece, takes candlesticks and carries them over to the convict who visibly trembles, yet receives them.*) Now, go in peace. By the bye when you return, my friend, it is unnecessary to pass through the garden, for you can always enter, day and night, by the front door, which is only latched. (*Turning to the Police officers.*) Gentlemen, you can retire. (*They go out. The bishop approaches the convict and speaks in a low voice.*) Never forget that you have promised me to employ this money in becoming an honest man. My brother, you no longer belong to evil, but to good. I have bought your soul of you. I withdraw it from black thoughts and the spirit of perdition, and give it to God. (*The look of bewilderment on the convict's face changes to veneration for the bishop and he goes out.*)

THE PEASANT BOY'S VINDICATION.

The last scene of "The Peasant Boy," a very old play by Dimond.

CHARACTERS.

Alberti, *the* DUKE, *just returned from the wars.*

Montaldi, *his brother, just returned from the gaming tables of Italy, where he has lost heavily.*

Julian, *an honest-looking young peasant.*

Ludovico, *a friend of* ALBERTI, *who has met* MONTALDI *elsewhere and knows his character.*

Stefano, *a guard who arrests* JULIAN.

Situation.—MONTALDI *in despair at his gambling losses arrives at* ALBERTI'S *home to find that his brother is expected soon to return after a prolonged absence. He coldly plans to murder* ALBERTI *that he may succeed to the dukedom with its financial resources.* LUDOVICO, *a friend of the duke, suspects some treacherous design and by following* MONTALDI *is able to prevent the assassination.* JULIAN *is arrested and while he is in jail awaiting the trial, is offered large bribes by* MONTALDI *to confess the assault; but* LUDOVICO *sends word to call upon him in case of great extremity.*

The judge's chair and desk should be so placed that MONTALDI'S *right hand in a glove may be very evident to the audience. There should be a group of peasants in which is* LUDOVICO *at the back of the stage watching the trial.*

Enter Guards, conducting JULIAN—*all the characters follow, and a crowd of vassals*—ALBERTI *advances to the judgment seat.*

ALBERTI.—My people !—the cause of your present assemblage too well is known to you. You come to witness the dispensations of an awful but impartial justice ;—either to rejoice in the acquittal of innocence or to approve the conviction of guilt. Personal feelings forbid me to assume this seat myself ; yet fear not but that it will be filled by nobleness and honor ;—to Montaldi only, I resign it.

JULIAN (*aside*).—He my judge ! then I am lost indeed.

ALBERTI.—Ascend the seat, my friend, and decide from it as your own virtuous conscience shall direct. This only will I say : should the scales of accusation and defence poise doubtfully, let mercy touch them with her downy hand and turn the balance on the gentler side.

MONTALDI (*ascending the seat*).—Your will and honor are my only governors ! (*Bows.*) Julian ! stand forth ! you are charged with a most foul and horrible attempt upon the life of my noble kinsman—the implements of murder have been found in your possession, and many powerful circumstances combine to fix the guilt upon you. What have you to urge in vindication?

JULIAN.—On the evening of yesterday, I crossed the mountain to the monastery of St. Bertrand ; my errand thither finished, I returned directly to the valley. Rosalie saw me enter the cottage—soon afterwards a strange outcry recalled me to the door ; a mantle spread before the threshold caught my eye ; I raised it, and discovered a mask within it. The mantle was newly stained with blood ! consternation seized upon my soul—the next minute I was surrounded by guards, and accused of murder. They produced a weapon I had lost. I had not power to explain the

truth. I was dragged to the dungeons of the castle. I may become the victim of circumstance, but I never have been the slave of crime!

MONTALDI (*smiling ironically*).—Plausibly urged; have you no more to offer?

JULIAN.—Truth needs not many words—I have spoken!

MONTALDI.—Yet bethink yourself—dare you abide by this wild tale, and brave a sentence on no stronger plea?

JULIAN.—Alas! I have none else to offer.

MONTALDI.—You say, on the evening of yesterday, you visited the monastery of St. Bertrand. What was your business there?

JULIAN (*with hesitation*).—With father Nicolo—to engage him to marry Rosalie and myself on the following morning.

MONTALDI.—A marriage too! Well!—at what time did you quit the monastery?

JULIAN.—The bell for vesper-service had just ceased to toll.

MONTALDI.—By what path did you return to the valley?

JULIAN.—Across the mountain.

MONTALDI.—Did you not pass through the wood of olives, where the dark deed was attempted?

JULIAN (*recollecting*).—The wood of olives?

MONTALDI.—Ha! mark! he hesitates—speak!

JULIAN (*with resolution*).—I did pass through the wood of olives.

MONTALDI.—Ay! and pursuit was close behind. Stefano, you seized the prisoner?

STEFANO.—I did. The bloody weapon bore his name; the mask and mantle were in his hands, and he was shaking in every limb.

MONTALDI.—Enough! heavens! that villainy so monstrous should inhabit such a tender youth! Oh, wretched

youth, I warn you to confess. Sincerity can be your only claim to mercy.

JULIAN.—I have spoken truth: yes,—Heaven knows that I have spoken truth!

MONTALDI.—Then I must exercise my duty. Death is my sentence.

JULIAN.—Hold!—pronounce it not as yet.

MONTALDI.—If you have any further evidence, produce it.

JULIAN (*with despairing energy*).—I call on Ludovico.

(LUDOVICO *steps forward with alacrity*—MONTALDI *recoils with visible trepidation.*)

LUDOVICO.—I am here!

MONTALDI.—And what can he unfold! only repeat that which we already know. I will not hear him—the evidence is perfect——

ALBERTI (*rising with warmth*).—Hold! Montaldi, Ludovico must be heard; to the ear of justice, the lightest syllable of proof is precious.

MONTALDI (*confused*).—I stand rebuked. Well, Ludovico, depose your evidence.

LUDOVICO.—Mine was the fortunate arm to rescue the duke. I fought with the assassin, and drove him beyond the trees into the open lawn. I there distinctly marked his figure, and from the difference in the height alone, Julian cannot be the person.

MONTALDI.—This is no proof—the eye might easily be deceived. I cannot withhold my sentence longer.

LUDOVICO.—I have further matter to advance. Just before the ruffian fled, he received a wound across his right hand; the moonlight showed me that the cut was deep and dangerous. Julian's fingers bear no such mark.

MONTALDI (*evincing great emotion and involuntarily drawing his glove closer over his hand*).—A wound—mere fable—

LUDOVICO.—Nay, more—the same blow struck from off

one of the assassin's fingers, a jewel; it glittered as it fell; I snatched it from the grass—I now produce it—'tis here—a ring—an amethyst set with brilliants!

ALBERTI (*rising hastily*).—What say you? an amethyst set with brilliants! even such I gave Montaldi. Let me view it.—(*As Ludovico advances to present the ring to the duke, Montaldi rushes with frantic impetuosity between, and attempts to seize it.*)

MONTALDI—Slave! resign the ring!

LUDOVICO.—I will yield my life sooner!

MONTALDI.—Wretch! I will rend thy frame to atoms! (*They struggle with violence, Montaldi snatches at the ring, Ludovico catches his hand and tears off the glove—the wound appears.*)

LUDOVICO.—Murder is unmasked—the bloody mark is here! Montaldi is the assassin. (*All rush forward in astonishment—Julian drops upon his knee in mute thanksgiving.*)

MONTALDI.—Shame! madness! hell!

ALBERTI.—Eternal Providence! Montaldi a murderer!

MONTALDI.—Ay! accuse and curse! Idiots! Dupes! I heed you not! I can but die! Triumph not, Alberti—I trample on thee still! (*He draws a poniard and attempts to destroy himself—the weapon is wrested from his hand by the guards.*)

ALBERTI.—Fiend! thy power to sin is past.

MONTALDI (*delirious with passion*).—Ha! ha! ha! my brain scorches, and my veins run with fire! disgraced, dishonored! oh! madness! I cannot bear it—save me—oh! (*He falls into the arms of attendants.*)

ALBERTI.—Wretched man! bear him to his chamber—his punishment be hereafter. (*They carry him off.*)

JULIAN.—Oh! my heart is too full for words.

ALBERTI.—Noble boy! You shall have Rosalio, and we will all attend the ceremony.—CURTAIN.

THE BARON AND THE JEW.

Adapted from the novel, " Ivanhoe," by Sir Walter Scott.

CHARACTERS.

Sir Reginald Front-de-Boeuf, *a large, cruel old English baron.*

Isaac of York, *a Jew in the dungeon of the baron.*

Two Saracens, *servants of the baron.*

Situation.—*The Jew, his daughter and many others of a company, have just been captured and carried within the castle, where* FRONT-DE-BŒUF *seizes the opportunity to extract money from the Jew by means of torturing irons. The appearance of another party without the castle saves the Jew from torture.*

The BARON *carries a poniard at his belt and a bunch of rusty old keys on his right side. The Jew is crouching in the corner of the dungeon. Enter the* BARON *with several slaves, deliberately locks and double locks the door, very slowly approaches* ISAAC, *who stares at him in perfect terror.*

ISAAC.—So may Abraham, Jacob, and all the fathers of our people assist me. I have not the means of satisfying your demand.

BARON.—Seize him, and strip him, slaves, and let the fathers of his race assist him if they can. (*The servants*

seize ISAAC, *raise him from the floor and glare at him with cunning ferocity.*)

ISAAC (*after looking at the baron and the servants*).—I will pay the thousand pounds of silver—that is, with the help of my brethren; for I must beg as a mendicant at the door of our synagogue ere I make up so unheard of a sum. When and where must it be delivered?

BARON.—Here must it be delivered—weighed and told down on this very dungeon floor. Thinkest thou I will part with thee until thy ransom is secure?

ISAAC.—And what is to be my surety that I shall be at liberty after this ransom is paid?

BARON.—The word of a Norman noble, thou pawn-broking slave; the faith of a Norman nobleman, more pure than the gold and silver of thee and all thy tribe.

ISAAC.—I crave pardon, noble lord, but wherefore should I rely wholly on the word of one who will trust nothing to mine?

BARON.—Because thou canst not help it, Jew. Wert thou now in thy treasure-chamber at York, and were I craving a loan of thy shekels it would be thine to dictate. This is *my* treasure-chamber. Here I have thee at advantage, nor will I deign to repeat the terms on which I grant thee liberty. When shall I have the shekels, Isaac?

ISAAC.—Let my daughter Rebecca go forth to York with your safe conduct, noble knight, and so soon as man and horse can return, the treasure (*groans*)—the treasure shall be told down on this very floor.

BARON.—Thy daughter! by heavens, Isaac, I would I had known of this. I gave yonder black-browed maiden to Sir Brian de Bois Guilbert.

ISAAC (*yells so that servants loose their hold. He then throws himself down and clasps the knees of the baron*).—

Take all that you have asked, sir knight,—take ten times more—reduce me to ruin and to beggary, if thou wilt, but spare my daughter, deliver her in safety and honor. Will you reduce a father to wish that his only living child were laid beside her dead mother, in the tomb of our fathers?

BARON.—I would that I had known of this before. I thought your race had loved nothing save their money-bags.

ISAAC (*eagerly*).—Think not so vilely of us, Jews though we be. The hunted fox, the tortured wild-cat loves its young—the despised and persecuted race of Abraham love their children.

BARON.—Be it so, I will believe it in future, Isaac, for thy very sake—but it aids us not now. I cannot help what has happened, or what is to follow; my word is passed to my comrade in arms, nor would I break it for ten Jews and Jewesses to boot. Besides, why shouldst thou think evil is to come to the girl, even if she became Bois Guilbert's booty?

ISAAC.—There will, there must! (*He wrings his hands in agony.*) When did templars breathe aught but cruelty to men and dishonor to women?

BARON.—Dog of an infidel, blaspheme not the Holy Order of the Temple of Zion, but take thought instead to pay me the ransom thou hast promised or woe betide thy Jewish throat!

ISAAC (*with great passion*).—Robber and villain! I will pay thee nothing—not one silver penny will I pay thee, unless my daughter is delivered to me in safety and honor!

BARON (*sternly*).—Art thou in thy senses, Israelite? Has thy flesh and blood a charm against heated iron and scalding oil?

ISAAC (*desperately*).—I care not. Do thy worst. My daughter is my flesh and blood, dearer to me a thousand

times than those limbs which thy cruelty threatens. No silver will I give thee, unless I were to pour it molten down thy avaricious throat—no, not a silver penny will I give thee, Nazarene, were it to save thee from the deep damnation thy whole life has merited. Take my life if thou wilt, and say the Jew, amidst his tortures, knew how to disappoint the Christian.

Baron.—We shall see that; for by the blessed rood, which is the abomination of thy accursed tribe, thou shalt feel the extremities of fire and steel! Strip him, slaves, and chain him down upon the bars. (*The servants seize Isaac and have him partially stripped, when the sound of a bugle twice without and voices calling "Sir Reginald Front-de-Boeuf" stop proceedings. The baron makes a sign to the servants and goes out followed by the servants and Isaac who is putting on his coat.*)

IN LOVE WITH HIS WIFE.

CHARACTERS.

Doctor Aiken, *a prosperous country physician, wise and gentle.*

Josephine Barton, *an actress with painted face, and abrupt manners.*

Situation.—*Doctor Aiken has been in attendance on a poor woman in great distress. Her sole companion is an actress known as* Josephine Barton, *who cares for her with the utmost devotion. He is impressed with the sincere disinterestedness of the actress and discloses his own affection for her. She proves to be his long lost wife.*

The scene takes place in a poor lodging in the country. There is a fireplace at the side and a light in the back part of the room.

Actress *is sitting by a table in the front of the platform.* Doctor *enters softly from an inner room and closes the door carefully.*

Josephine.—Oh, there you are, doctor. How is she to-day?

Doctor.—Better, thanks to you.

Josephine.—Oh dear no! I've done nothing.

Doctor.—You have nursed her until you are ill and worn out yourself. May I feel your pulse?

Josephine.—No.

DOCTOR.—You think you are all right?

JOSEPHINE.—I know I am.

DOCTOR.—May I stay and talk to you a little?

JOSEPHINE.—If you like.

DOCTOR.—You have been here a month.

JOSEPHINE.—Yes, luckily for Lil, or she would have lost her engagement.

DOCTOR.—And her nurse too.

JOSEPHINE.—How do you know? I might have gone on with the company and left her.

DOCTOR.—Might you?

JOSEPHINE.—Don't think me a saint!

DOCTOR.—I haven't yet put you in that light. I have only seen a very good woman.

JOSEPHINE (*putting up her hand*).—Stop! Talk of something else. Now, you would never think, would you, that I was playing last night—to look at me, I mean?

DOCTOR (*giving her an indifferent look*).—Well, no.

JOSEPHINE.—Make-up, sir. It's a splendid thing to make up our characters, too, in real life, so that you sha'n't detect us. Now you think I'm good?

DOCTOR.—I think nothing of the kind.

JOSEPHINE (*disconcerted*).—Good gracious! Do you think I'm bad?

DOCTOR (*smiling*).—I have already told you that your devotion to your friend has won my most honest admiration.

JOSEPHINE.—Oh! Well, that's put on. It pays. She will nurse me when I am ill, won't she? (*Silence for a moment.*) Doctor, don't believe in me.

DOCTOR.—I can't help it.

JOSEPHINE.—Why I am a mass of deceit. What color would you call my hair?

DOCTOR.—Golden—a golden brown.

JOSEPHINE.—I knew it. My hair is really black, (*he starts*) dyed, sir, as we dye our very natures, lest you should discover the color of our sins.

DOCTOR (*as if recollecting something amazing*).—Black ?

JOSEPHINE.—Of course ! Cleverly managed, that's all. It makes a vast difference to a face. Once when we were very poor——

DOCTOR (*astonished*).—We ! That is, yourself and your friend.

JOSEPHINE.—No ! I was married—I meant the child. It died.

DOCTOR.—I was married too.

JOSEPHINE.—Were you? Is she dead?

DOCTOR (*quietly*).—No ! She ran away. She was very young and giddy, and I was grave and stern, and she tired of me. That is all.

JOSEPHINE. — And you have hated women from that moment, of course.

DOCTOR.—I lost my faith in them.

JOSEPHINE.—Will it never return?

DOCTOR (*with warmth*).—It has returned.

JOSEPHINE.— What nonsense ! Don't let it ! Yet we are, after all, much what men make us. I held my real nature hidden for two years at the pleasure of a man, and it broke free at last. I was treated like a child just as I was struggling to be a woman, and my best impulses were laughed at, and kept down.

DOCTOR.—And so you leave to-morrow?

JOSEPHINE.—Yes.

DOCTOR (*with concern*).—To continue to lead this life?

JOSEPHINE.—Why not? It is no less true for seeming false. I remember when my baby died I had to play just

the same, and in the piece I had to cry, and I did. And a woman I knew in the audience told me I was a fool to put glycerine on my lashes to look like tears, because it ruined my make-up. That's life! Give men and women the real article and they think they see through it, and doubt its truth. Give them paste and paint, and they like it, and believe it true, and know better than the owner of it. People will persist in being too clever; but, after all, they only cheat themselves.

DOCTOR (*smiling*).—You are quite a philosopher.

JOSEPHINE.—I am a woman who has suffered—perhaps that's the same thing.

DOCTOR.—You were not educated for the stage?

JOSEPHINE (*bitterly*).—No; I was educated for a man.

DOCTOR.—You mean——

JOSEPHINE.—I mean I was very young when I married, and he was clever, and wished to mould me after his own pattern. I chose to pretend this was impossible; but my nature grew all the same. Let a man beware when he crushes ambition and interest in a woman, it will live in spite of him, and come to the surface some time. Now, your wife——

DOCTOR.—Was young and foolish—never sinful—that is all.

JOSEPHINE.—And you were never selfish enough to wish her sole pride to be in you, her sole interest in your interests, her sole knowledge, the knowledge you instilled into her giddy brain?

DOCTOR.—I hope not.

JOSEPHINE.—You were never jealous of her mind, as you were jealous of her favor, of her love for art and literature—a blind love, for she knew little of either—because you could not spare time to instruct her in either?

DOCTOR.—Again—I hope not.

JOSEPHINE.—Then you were. We never hope about a certainty.

DOCTOR.—If she had been a woman—well, like you—all might have been different.

JOSEPHINE.—Nonsense! You have seen one side of my character, that is all. Men are so quick to imagine the surface turned towards them is the only one we women own.

DOCTOR.—I saw you tending your sick friend. I saw your patience and love for her. I see you slaving at your profession with no one to help and encourage you, leading a life that must be often uncongenial. I want to know little more of you than that.

JOSEPHINE.—False! False! Everything's false. There is nothing real about me. Now, my age?

DOCTOR (*smiling*).—You are not very old.

JOSEPHINE.—My back is to the light. Put out your hand and touch my cheek. (*He does it.*) Why, how your hand trembles! Covered with white stuff, of course. Wrinkles all hidden. I told you about my hair.

DOCTOR.—I don't care. I—I like the woman I know. The woman you have been since I first met you—when they carried your friend home ill from the theatre, and then sent for me. If you are false, I am afraid I love falseness. I am foolish enough to have got so far that even defamation of yourself from your own lips could not harm you. Yet I am glad after all, that you are going; for, as I told you, I have a wife somewhere, and even to love you as I love you, is a sin.

JOSEPHINE (*rising and walking away*).—You love me.

DOCTOR (*passionately*).—As I never knew one could love. I even love this poor, pretty, tortured hair, and

these dear tired eyes. I love you painted, or old, laughing or in tears. I seem to have crept out of the cold and found your heart as it really is. Don't try to hide it from me. The glimpses I have had of it have been paradise.

JOSEPHINE.—Her hair—your wife's hair—was black.

DOCTOR.—Who told you that?

JOSEPHINE.— The way you looked when I said what mine had been. Try and imagine me with black hair.

DOCTOR.—I can't.

JOSEPHINE.—And so you love this actress?

DOCTOR.—And would marry her if——

JOSEPHINE.—If she were *your wife*.

DOCTOR (*starting in alarm*).—What do you mean?

JOSEPHINE.—Look at me well. (*He gazes at her intensely for a moment or two. Then she lays her hand tenderly on his arm.*) Our little baby died, dear. (*He embraces her and they stand gazing at each other as the curtain falls.*)

CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS.

CHARACTERS.

Claudius, *a Roman in exile, with a keen, cruel face and unkempt appearance, and with a bent and shrivelled form.*

Philo, *a Christian, with noble gentle face and strong athletic body.*

Situation.—CLAUDIUS *as a judge in Rome condemned* PHILO *and all his family to the slaughter of the arena. But* PHILO *by his immense strength slew the lion and then through Pompilius Taurus effected his escape. His father and the rest of his family were killed. In the wilderness* PHILO *has wandered, has built himself a hut, and has supported a family.* CLAUDIUS, *banished from Rome, a homeless, hopeless old man, with only cruelties in his past life to contemplate, meets* PHILO, *who at first thinks only of vengeance; but when* CLAUDIUS *appeals to his mercy as a Christian he relents, takes him home and ministers to him.*

The costumes should be the Roman dress of about the time of Nero. The scenery represents a thick forest.

CLAUDIUS *enters, looking about in despair.*

CLAUDIUS.—Alone, in this impenetrable forest!
No token of a human habitation,
Look where I may! My voice is hoarse with shouting.
No answer comes, save from some startled bird
Or creeping thing of prey. (*Calls.*). Ho! Hear me! Ho!

Vain effort!—Hark! The crackling of a bough!
A human footstep!—Yes! Relief is nigh!

PHILO *enters.*

O, welcome, stranger, whosoe'er thou art!
For I am lost in these bewildering thickets.
Most timely is thy coming.

PHILO.—And who art thou?

CLAUDIUS.—A Roman; once in power; now an exile—
A wretched outcast, plundered and forsaken;
Compelled to seek this rude and dangerous shelter.

PHILO.—If thou art wretched and an exile, welcome!
(*Gives his hand.*)

CLAUDIUS.—Thou shalt not find me poor in gratitude,
Though otherwise a beggar. Is there not
Some place of refuge near us?

PHILO.—On the border
Of this thick wood, I with my wife and children,
Dwell in a place I will not call a house,
But where at least life's poor necessities
Of food and shelter may be found. The little
We have to share, thou shalt be welcome to.

CLAUDIUS.—How happens it that thou, a man whose speech
Proclaims thou'rt not a mere clod-turning peasant,
Canst in a wild like this content thyself,
Far from the guardianship and pomp of Rome?

PHILO.—The guardianship of Rome! The guardianship!
Great cause have I of gratitude for that!
For to Rome's fatal guardianship I owe
The massacre of kindred and of friends;
Of father, mother, brothers, butchered—butchered
All in cold blood! And oh! for what?

CLAUDIUS.—How? Butchered?
By Rome's authority? A family
Peaceable and obedient to the laws,
And guiltless—butchered by authority?
O, when and where?
PHILO.—Ten years ago—in Rome!
(*Aside*) Yes it is he! none other.
(*Aloud*) O last of all shouldst thou be ignorant!
CLAUDIUS.—Butchered by whom?
PHILO.—By thee! by thee! Thou art the man! thou, Claudius!
The unjust judge, the craven magistrate,
Creature of Nero, purveyor of his brutal,
His fiendish cruelties! Thou art the man!
For what—for what was all that wealth of blood,
Of pure and innocent blood, poured out like water?
Because it ran in Christian veins!
CLAUDIUS.—Thou ravest!
My hands were never stained with Christian blood.
(*Agitated*) You do mistake me for some other man.
I will depart. (*Going.*)
PHILO.—Stay! One lie more or less
Cannot be much to *thee*. Thy cowering glance,
Thy trembling knees, belie thy faltering words.
Let me refresh thy memory a little.
Dost thou remember that eventful day,
In the great amphitheatre, when first
Thou wert informed, the famous Libyan lion,
The emperor's favorite, that dreadful beast
Which thou hadst ordered out to tear in pieces
A white-haired man, Servetus Cincinnatus,
(My father!)—had been slain?
Dost thou recall thy rage against the slayer?

Thou dost! *I* slew the beast!—Vain all disguise!

CLAUDIUS.—How—how didst thou escape?

PHILO.—Ah, ha! Thy words,—
Thy very words betray thee! Even now,
If fear would let thee, thou wouldst plunge thy dagger
Here in my heart. But how did I escape?
I'll tell thee how. The man thou didst most trust
Became a Christian.

CLAUDIUS.—He! Pompilius Taurus
Oh, had I known it then!

PHILO.—Poor, baffled hound!
Dost thou regret, even in retrospection,
The relish of a disappointed vengeance?
Why do thy fingers work so? Ah! thou *wouldst*,
But durst not! What are *thy* limbs and sinews
Compared with *these* that have been trained and tested
In wrestling with wild nature for my food,
With the fierce bear for life, or with the gale
Upon the lake, for safety?

CLAUDIUS.—Do not abuse thy power! Forgive —forgive me!

PHILO.—Forgive thee? Oh! Have I not often revelled
In the anticipation of a moment
Like this now present—when I could have thee thus—
With no one by—when I could grasp thee thus—(*Grasps him.*)
Thus —thus by the throat—and hiss into thy ear,
Remember old—Servetus!

CLAUDIUS.—Mercy!

PHILO.—Mercy?
Ay! even such mercy as *thou* didst show, abhorred one,
Show to that gray-haired man, his kneeling wife,
And his imploring children!
Thy only answer to their prayer was *death!*

Not a swift, easy death, but one of torture,—
Of horror,—in the amphitheatre,—
Torn by wild beasts! Dost *thou* dare plead for mercy?

CLAUDIUS (*sinking on his knees*).—As thou'rt a man, be merciful!

PHILO.—That plea
Will not avail.

CLAUDIUS.—Ah! then, as thou'rt a Christian! (*A pause, during which Philo gently and gradually releases his hold and Claudius rises.*)

PHILO.—And dost thou venture to pronounce *that* name,
The sacred name, by thee so spurned and hated?
I thank thee for it, Claudius! Ay, I thank thee.
Thou hast recalled me to my better self.
Bloody oppressor, diligent murderer,
And persecutor of all Christian men,
As thou hast been,—with every hair of thy head
Steeped in my family's blood,—still, do not fear!
Thou 'rt safe.

CLAUDIUS.—Thanks! thanks! (*Going.*)

PHILO.—Why, whither wouldst thou go?

CLAUDIUS.—To find a shelter for the night.

PHILO.—To perish!
What with the hungry wolf, the inclement air,
Slender thy chance of life!
Here! Come with *me*, and thou shalt have a bed
In my poor hut, with food, and warmth, and safety.
Wilt thou not trust me?

CLAUDIUS.—Oh, thy wrongs have been
Too deadly for forgiveness!

PHILO.—Knowest thou not,
The Christian, *if* a Christian, *must* forgive,
As he would be forgiven by the Father?

CLAUDIUS.—But here forgiveness fails. I blame thee not.
For now, in this majestic solitude,
My crimes start up between me and all hope,
I know it is not in the heart of man,
Where such wrongs cry aloud, to cast out vengeance.

PHILO.—"Vengeance is mine! I will repay, saith the Lord!"

I do forgive thee Claudius.
The Christian's *act* shall tell thee what his *faith* is.
Not the dear child who hangs about my neck
And calls me *father* shall more tenderly
Be cared for and protected from all danger
Than thou, if thou wilt come and be my guest.
Dost thou believe me?

CLAUDIUS (*covering his face, in agony*).—Ay! I cannot help it.

The creed *must* be divine that works this change.
O that I could blot out the hateful past!
O that I might cast off that weight of sin!

PHILO.—This is no fitful mood.
'Tis Christ's own hand has led thee here, my brother;
And from that hand, with reverence I accept thee. (*Taking his hand.*)
Do not despair! There's balm for thee in Gilead.
Hereafter, should I waver in my kindness,
Utter again that plea: "As thou'rt a Christian!" (*They go out.*)

A WIFE AND A HOME.

CHARACTERS.

Colonel Mason, *an old man, follower of Cromwell.*

Juliet Mason, *his daughter.*

Ernest Montague, *a young follower of the King.*

Michael, *a servant to Colonel Mason.*

Situation.—ERNEST MONTAGUE *has been banished from England, and his property has been seized by the Roundheads of Cromwell and given to* MASON. *For various reasons* MONTAGUE *secretly visits England and takes occasion to revisit the scenes of his youth. Here he meets and falls in love with* JULIET. *She does not know that he formerly owned her home.*

The scene should represent an old-fashioned garden of the middle of the seventeenth century. On one side is a strong door or gate to the garden. The wall is high. It was the fashion then to say "thou" and "thee." The costumes should be old-fashioned, and if possible of the time of the Roundheads and Cavaliers.

Scene I.

JULIET MASON, *alone. She has a sprig of lavender in her hand.*

JULIET.—Oh, Ernest Montague.—He promised to meet me here by eight, and the great clock in the hall wanted but five minutes full half an hour ago. It must be half an

hour. I have been pacing up and down this walk from the yew-hedge to the fountain, twenty times at least, besides going twice to the little door in the garden wall, to be sure that it was unbolted. It can't be a minute less than half an hour. He had as well stay now in his hiding place at the village, for I'll never speak to him again. Never! and yet, poor fellow.—No! I'll never speak to him again!—(*Ernest Montague comes in stealthily. He looks round, then hastens to her and takes her hand. She turns away.*) So, Sir Ernest.

ERNEST.—So, my pretty Miss Juliet? Why turn away so angrily? What fault have I committed, I pray thee?

JULIET.—Fault? None.

ERNEST.—Nay, nay, my little Venus of the Puritans, my princess of all Precisions, if thou be offended, tell me so.

JULIET.—Offended, forsooth! People are never offended with people they don't care about.—Offended!

ERNEST.—And is it because some people don't care for other people, that they put their pretty selves into such pretty tantrums—eh, Miss Juliet? I am after time, sweet—but——

JULIET.—After time! I have been here this half-hour!—and my father fast asleep in the hall! After time! If thou had'st cared for me—But men are all alike. There hath not been a true lover in the world since the days of Amadis—and that was but a false legend. After time!—Why, if thou hadst cared for me only as much as I care for this sprig of lavender, thou wouldst have been waiting for me, before the chimes had rung seven. Just think of the time thou hast lost.—Now thou may'st go thy ways—Leave me, sir! (*She tries to withdraw her hand.*)

ERNEST.—Nay, mine own sweet love, do not offer to snatch thy hand away. I cannot part with thee, Juliet,

though thou shouldst flutter like a new caught dove. I must speak with thee. I have that to say which *must* be heard.

JULIET.—Well!

ERNEST.—I have been dogged all day by a canting Puritan, a follower, as I take it, of thy godly father.

JULIET.—Jeer not my father, Ernest, although he be a roundhead and thou a cavalier. He is a brave man and a good.

ERNEST.—He is thy father, and therefore sacred to me. Where did'st thou say he is now?

JULIET.—I left him in the hall, just settling quietly to an after-supper nap.—Why dost thou ask?

ERNEST.—I have been watched all day by one whom I suspect to be a spy; and I fear me, that in spite of my disguise, my false name, and my humble lodging, I am discovered.

JULIET.—Discovered in thy visits here? Discovered as my friend?

ERNEST.—No, no, I trust not so. Therefore I delayed to come to thee till I could shake off my unwelcome follower. Not discovered as thy lover, thy *friend*, if such name better please thee—but as the cavalier and malignant (for so their phrase runs) Ernest Montague.

JULIET.—But granting that were true, what harm hast thou done? What hast thou to fear?

ERNEST.—Small harm, dear Juliet, and yet in these bad days small harm may cause great fear. I have borne arms for the king; I have never acknowledged the Protector; and moreover, I am the rightful owner of this same estate and mansion of Montague Hall, its parks, manors, and dependencies, bestowed by the sequestrators on thy father, Colonel Mason. Seest thou no fear there, fair Juliet?

JULIET.—Alas! alas!

ERNEST.—Then my deceased father, stout old Sir William, has meddled in every plot and rising in the country, from the first year of the Rebellion to this, as I well trust, the last of the usurpation, so that the very name sounds like a fire-brand. 'Twould be held a fair service to the state, Juliet, to shoot thy poor friend; and yet I promise thee, albeit a loyal subject to king Charles, I am hardly fool enough to wage war in my own single person against Oliver, whom a mightier conqueror than himself will speedily overthrow.

JULIET.—A mightier conqueror!

ERNEST.—Even the great tyrant death—he who levels the mighty and the low—Ernest Montague and Oliver Cromwell!

JULIET.—Death! Art thou then in such peril? And dost thou loiter here? I beseech thee away! away this moment! what detains thee?

ERNEST.—That which brought me here—thyself. Being in England I came hither, more weeks ago than I care to think of, to look on my old birth-place, my old home. I saw thee, Juliet, and ever since I have felt that these walls are a thousand-fold more precious to me as thy home, as thy inheritance, than ever they could have been as mine. I love thee, Juliet.

JULIET.—Oh, go! go! go! To talk of love whilst thou art in such danger!

ERNEST.—I love thee, my own Juliet.

JULIET.—Go!

ERNEST.—Wilt thou go with me? I am not rich—I have no fair mansion to take thee to; but a soldier's arm, and a true heart, Juliet! Wilt thou go with me, sweet one? I'll bring horses to the little garden door. The moon will be

up at twelve (*She sobs in his arms.*)—Speak, dearest! And yet this trembling hand speaks for thee. Wilt thou go with me and be my wedded wife?

JULIET.—I will. (*He goes out as he came in, and she goes out on opposite side, looking and motioning to him.*)

Scene II.

ERNEST *enters from the side door.*

ERNEST.—Juliet! Not yet arrived! Surely she cannot have changed her purpose? No, no! it were treason against true love but to suspect her of wavering—she lingers from maiden modesty, from maiden fear, from natural affection, from all that man worships in woman. But if she knew the cause I have to dread every delay!

JULIET *enters from the house.*

Juliet! sweetest—how breathless thou art! Thou canst hardly stand! Rest thee on this seat a moment, my Juliet. And yet delay—hath aught befallen to affright thee? Sit here, dearest! What hath startled thee?

JULIET.—I know not. And yet—

ERNEST.—How thou tremblest still! And what——

JULIET.—As I passed the gallery.—Only feel how my heart flutters, Ernest!

ERNEST.—Blessings on that dear heart! Calm thee, sweetest.—What of the gallery?

JULIET.—As I passed, methought I heard voices.

ERNEST.—Indeed! And I too have missed the detected spy who hath been all day dogging my steps. Can he—but no! All is quiet in the house. Look, Juliet! All dark and silent. No light save the moonbeams dancing on the window panes with a cold pale brightness. No sound save the song of the nightingale—dost thou not hear it?

It seems to come from the tall shrubbery sweet-briar, which sends its fragrant breath in at yonder casement.

JULIET.—That is my father's chamber—my dear, dear father! Oh, when he shall awake and find his Juliet gone, little will the breath of the sweet-briar, or the song of the nightingale comfort him then! My dear, dear father! He kissed me after prayers to-night, and laid his hand on my head and blessed me. He will never bless his poor child again.

ERNEST.—Come, sweetest! The horses wait; the hours wear on; morning will soon be here.

JULIET.—Oh, what a morning to my poor, poor father! His Juliet, his only child, his beloved, his trusted! Oh, Ernest, my father! my father! (*She sobs on his shoulder.*)

ERNEST.—Maiden, if thou lovest thy father better than me, remain with him. It is not yet too late. I love thee, Juliet, too well to steal thee away against thy will, too well to take thy hand without thy heart. The choice is still open to thee. Return to thy father's house, or wend with me. Weep not thus, dear one; but decide, and quickly.

JULIET.—Nay, I will go with thee, Ernest. Forgive these tears! I'll go with thee to the end of the world. (*A noise. They start.*)

ERNEST.—Now then. What noise is that?

JULIET.—Surely, surely the turning of a key. (*They both jump to their feet in alarm.*)

ERNEST (*he tries to open door*).—Ay, the garden door is fastened; the horses are led off. We are discovered.

JULIET.—Is there no other way of escape?

ERNEST.—None. The garden is walled round. Look at these walls, Juliet; a squirrel could scarcely climb them. Through the house is the only chance; and that——

JULIET.—Try the door again; I do beseech thee, try.

Push against it—I never knew it fastened other than by this iron bolt. Push manfully. (*He struggles with door.*)

ERNEST.—It is all in vain; thou thyself heard'st the key turn; and see how it resists my utmost strength. The door is surely fast.

JULIET.—See; the household is alarmed! Look at the lights! Venture not so near, dear Ernest. Conceal thee in the arbor till all is quiet. I will go meet them.

ERNEST.—Alone?

JULIET.—Why, what have I to fear? Hide thee behind the yew-hedge till the first search be past, and then——

ERNEST.—Desert thee! Hide me! And I a Montague! But be calmer, sweetest! Thy father is too good a man to meditate aught unlawful. 'Twill be but some short restraint, with thee for my warder. Calm thee, dearest. (*They shrink back almost out of sight.*)

Enter COLONEL MASON *and a servant with an old-fashioned arquebuss.*

COLONEL MASON.—Shoot! Shoot instantly, Michael. (*Michael fumbles with fuse.*) Slay the robber! Why dost thou not fire? Be'st thou in league with him? What dost thou fumble at?

MICHAEL.—So please your worship, the wind hath extinguished the touch-paper. (*He holds up a bit of burnt paper.*)

COLONEL MASON.—The wind hath extinguished thy wits, I trow, that thou couldst bring aught but that old arquebuss. Return for a steel weapon. (*Michael goes out.*) Meantime my sword—I see but one man, and surely a soldier of the Cause and Covenant, albeit aged, may well cope with a night-thief. Come on, young man. Be'st thou coward as well as robber? Defend thyself.

JULIET.—Oh, father! father! (*She rushes to him.*) Wouldst thou do murder before thy daughter's eyes?

COLONEL MASON.—Cling not thus around me, maiden. What makest thou with that thief, that craven thief?

ERNEST.—Nay, tremble not, Juliet; for thy sake I will endure even this contumely.—Put up your sword, sir, it is needless. I yield myself your prisoner. When I make myself known to Colonel Mason, I trust that he will retract an expression as unworthy of his character as of mine.

COLONEL MASON.—I do know thee. Thou art the foul malignant Ernest Montague; the abettor of the plotting traitor Ormond: the outlawed son of the lawless cavalier who once owned this demesne.

ERNEST.—And knowing me for Ernest Montague couldst thou take me for a garden robber? Couldst thou grudge to the sometime heir of these old halls a parting glance of their venerable beauty?

COLONEL MASON.—Young man, wilt thou tell me, darest thou tell me, that it was to gaze on this old mansion that thou didst steal hither, like a thief in the night? Ernest Montague, canst thou look at thy father's house and utter that falsehood? Ye were a heathenish and blinded generation, main props of tyranny and prelacy, a worldly and a darkling race, who knew not the truth;—but yet, from your earliest ancestor to the last possessor of these walls, ye had amongst the false gods whom ye worshipped, one idol, called Honor. (*The young man shakes his head.*) Ernest Montague, I joy that thou hast yet enough of grace vouchsafed to thee to shrink from affirming that lie.

ERNEST.—But a robber! a garden-thief!

COLONEL MASON.—Ay, a robber! I said, and I repeat, a robber, a thief, a despoiler. Hath the garden no fruit save its apricots and dewberries? Hath the house no treasure

but its vessels of gold and silver? If ever thou art a father, and hast one hopeful and dutiful maiden, the joy of thine heart, and the apple of thine eye, (*she sinks down and covers her face to hide her tears*). then thou wilt hold all robbery light, so that it leaves thee her, all robbers guiltless save him who would steal thy child. Weep not thus, Juliet. And thou, young man, away. I joy that the old and useless gun defeated my angry purpose—that I slew not my enemy on his father's ground. Away with thee, young man! Go study the parable that Nathan spake to David. I will not make thee prisoner in the house of thy fathers. Thank me not; but go.—(*He turns away.*)

JULIET (*rising*).—Father, hear me!

COLONEL MASON.—Within! To-morrow! (*He points to the house.*)

JULIET (*falling on her knees.*)—Nay, here and now. Thou hast pardoned him; but thou hast not pardoned me.

COLONEL MASON.—I have forgiven thee—I do forgive thee.

JULIET.—Thou knowest not half my sins! I am the prime offender, the great and unrepenting culprit. I loved him, I do love him; we are betrothed, and I will hold faithful to my vow! Never shall another man wed Juliet Mason! Oh, father, I knew not till this very hour how dear thy poor child was to thy heart—Canst thou break hers?

COLONEL MASON (*tenderly.*)—Juliet, this is a vain and simple fancy.

JULIET.—Father, it is love—plead for us, Ernest.

ERNEST.—Alas! I dare not. Thou art a rich heiress; I am a poor exile.

JULIET.—Out on such distinctions! one word from my father; one stroke of Cromwell's pen, and thou art an exile no longer. Plead for us, Ernest!

ERNEST.—Juliet, I dare not. Thy father is my benefactor; he has given me life and liberty. Wouldst thou have me repay these gifts by bereaving him of his child?

JULIET.—We will not leave him. We will dwell together. Ernest, wilt thou not speak? (*Silence.*)

COLONEL MASON (*looking long and searchingly at Montague.*) His honorable silence hath pleaded better for him than words. Ernest Montague, dost thou love this maid?

ERNEST.—Do I love her!

COLONEL MASON.—I believe in good truth that thou dost. Take her then from the hand of her father.—There is room enough in yonder mansion for the heir and the heiress, the old possessor and the new. Take her, and Heaven bless ye, my children! (*He goes out and they follow arm in arm.*)

AURELIAN AND ZENOBIA.

Adapted from "Zenobia," by William Ware.

CHARACTERS.

Aurelian, *a dark, powerful man, courageous, generous, quick-tempered,—Emperor of Rome.*

Zenobia, *tall, beautiful, and commanding in form and feature,—Queen of Palmyra.*

Antiochus, *powerfully, but loosely built, dull, unprincipled, —betrayer of Queen.*

Sindarina, *very dark, tall, slender,—an Indian princess, slave of Queen, accomplice of* ANTIOCHUS.

Julia, *daughter of Zenobia.*

Carus, *an officer of high rank in the Roman army.*

Officers, guards, attendants.

Situation.—ZENOBIA, *Queen of Palmyra, has become so great in the East that* AURELIAN, *Emperor of Rome, has demanded the relinquishing of all titles but that of Queen of Palmyra. She defies him. He sets out for the East, defeats her in two battles, and besieges* PALMYRA. *As she is secretly going to ask aid of a neighboring nation, she is betrayed and led to the tent of* AURELIAN. *There, the following interview takes place.*

AURELIAN, CARUS, *and two officers stand at the side of the platform, watching the slow approach of* ZENOBIA, JULIA *and an attendant.*

AURELIAN (*evidently affected by the majestic bearing of Zenobia*).—It is a happy day for Rome, (*he salutes her courteously*) that sees you, lately Queen of Palmyra and of the East, a captive in the tent of Aurelian.

ZENOBIA (*in a melancholy tone*).—And a dark one for my afflicted country.

AURELIAN.—It might have been darker, had not the good providence of the gods delivered you into my hands.

ZENOBIA.—The gods preside not over treachery. And it must have been by treason among those in whom I have placed my most familiar trust, that I am now where and what I am. It had been a nobler triumph to you, O Roman, and a lighter fall to me, had the field of battle decided the fate of my kingdom, and led me prisoner to your tent.

AURELIAN.—Doubtless it had been so; yet was it for me to cast away what chance threw into my power? A war is now happily ended, which, had your mission succeeded, might yet have raged—and but to the mutual harm of two great nations. Yet it was a bold and sagacious device. A more determined, a better appointed or more desperate foe, I have never yet contended with.

ZENOBIA.—It were strange indeed, if you met not with a determined foe, when life and liberty were to be defended. Had not treason, base and accursed treason, given me up like a chained slave to your power, yonder walls must have first been beaten piecemeal down by your engines, and buried me beneath their ruins, and famine cluched all whom the sword had spared, ere we had owned you master. What is life, when liberty and independence are gone?

AURELIAN.—But why, let me ask, were you moved to

assert an independency of Rome? How many peaceful and prosperous years have rolled on since Trajan and the Antonines, while you and Rome were at harmony. Why was this order disturbed? What madness ruled to turn you against the power of Rome?

ZENOBIA.—The same madness that tells Aurelian he may yet possess the whole world, and sends him here into the far East to wage needless war with a woman—Ambition! Yet had Aurelian always been upon the Roman throne, or one resembling him, it had perhaps been different. There then could have been naught but honor in any alliance that had bound together Rome and Palmyra. But while the thirty tyrants were fighting for the Roman crown, was I to sit still waiting humbly to become the passive prey of whosoever might please to call me his? By the immortal gods, not so! I asserted my supremacy and made it felt. I came in and reduced the jarring elements of the Eastern provinces, and out of parts broken and sundered, and hostile, constructed a fair and well-proportioned whole. And when I had tasted the sweets of sovereign and despotic power—what they are, thou knowest—was I tamely to yield the whole at the word or threat even of Aurelian? It could not be. Sprung from a royal line, and so long upon a throne, it was superior force alone—divine or human—that should drag me from my right. Thou hast been but four years king, Aurelian, monarch of the great Roman world, yet wouldst thou not, but with painful unwillingness, descend and mingle with the common herd. For me, ceasing to reign, I would cease to live.

AURELIAN.—Thy speech shows thee well worthy to reign. It is no treason to Rome, Carus (*he turns to his general*), to lament that the fates have cast down from a throne one who filled its seat so well. Hadst thou hearkened to my

message thou mightest still, lady, have sat upon thy native seat. The crown of Palmyra might still have girt thy brow.

ZENOBIA.—But not of the East.

AURELIAN.—I lament, great Queen,—for so I may call thee—that upon an ancient defender of our Roman honor, upon her who revenged Rome upon the insolent Persian, this heavy fate should fall. The debt of Rome to Zenobia is great, and shall yet in some sort at least be paid. Curses upon those who moved thee to this war. They have brought this calamity upon thee, Queen, not I nor thou. This is not a woman's war.

ZENOBIA.—Rest assured, great prince, that the war was mine. I had indeed great advisers, Longinus, Gracchus, Zabdas, Otho. Their names are honored in Rome as well as here. They have been with me, but without lying or vanity, I may say I have been their head.

AURELIAN.—Be it so; nevertheless, thy services shall be remembered.—But let us now to the affairs before us. The city has not surrendered—though thy captivity is known, the gates are still shut. A word from thee would open them.

ZENOBIA (*indignantly*).—It is a word I cannot speak. Wouldst thou that I too should turn traitor?

AURELIAN.—It surely would not be that. It can avail naught to contend further—it can but end in a wider destruction, both of your people and my soldiers.

ZENOBIA.—Longinus, I may suppose is now supreme. Let the emperor address him and what is right will be done.

AURELIAN (*he turns and converses a moment with his officers*).—Within the walls thou hast sons. Is it not so?

ZENOBIA (*quickly in alarm*).—It is not they, nor either of them who have conspired against me!

AURELIAN.—No—not quite so. Yet he who betrayed

thee calls himself of thy family. Thy sons surely were not in league with him.—(*Speaking in a louder tone*) Soldiers, lead forth the great Antiochus and his slave. (*The Queen starts at the name, Julia utters a faint cry.*)

ANTIOCHUS *enters, followed by* SINDARINA, *who stands for a moment with bowed head, then in great emotion rushes to the Queen, throws herself at her feet covering them with kisses.*

ZENOBIA (*with deep sorrow*).—My poor Sindarina! (*Sindarina's sobs choke her utterance.*)

AURELIAN (*sternly*).—Bear her away,—bear her from the tent. (*A guard seizes her and hurries away.*) This (*he turns to Zenobia*) is thy kinsman, as he tells me—the Prince Antiochus? (*Zenobia makes no reply.*) He has done Rome a great service. (*Antiochus straightens himself up.*) He has the merit of ending a weary and disastrous war. It is a rare fortune to fall to any one. 'Tis a work to grow great upon. Yet, Prince, the work is not complete. The city yet holds out. If I am to reward thee with the sovereign power, as thou sayest, thou must open the gates. Canst thou do it?

ANTIOCHUS (*eagerly*).—Great Prince, it is provided for. Allow me but a few moments, and a place proper for it, and the gates I warrant shall swing quickly upon their hinges.

AURELIAN (*ironically*).—Ah! do you say so? That is well. What, I pray, is the process?

ANTIOCHUS.—At a signal which I shall make, noble Prince, and which has been agreed upon, every head of every one of the Queen's party rolls in the dust—Longinus, Gracchus, and his daughter, and a host more—their heads fall. The gates are then to be thrown open.

AURELIAN.—Noble Palmyrene, you have the thanks of

all. Of the city then we are at length secure. For this, thou wouldst have the rule of it under Rome, wielding a sceptre in the name of the Roman senate, and paying tribute as a subject province? Is it not so?

ANTIOCHUS.—It is. That is what I would have, and would do, most excellent Aurelian.

AURELIAN.—Who are thy associates in this? Are the Queen's sons of thy side and partners in this enterprise?

ANTIOCHUS.—They are not privy to the design to deliver up to thy great power the Queen their mother; but they are my friends, and most surely do I count upon their support. As I shall return king of Palmyra, they will gladly share my power.

AURELIAN (*in terrific tones*).—But if friends of thine they are enemies of mine. They are seeds of future trouble. They may sprout up into kings also, to Rome's annoyance. They must be crushed. Dost thou understand me?

ANTIOCHUS.—I do, great Prince. Leave them to me. I will do for them. But to say the truth they are too weak to disturb any—friends or enemies.

AURELIAN.—Escape not so. They must die.

ANTIOCHUS (*somewhat alarmed*).—They shall, they shall; soon as I am within the walls their heads shall be sent to thee.

AURELIAN.—That now is as I would have it. One thing more thou hast asked—that the fair slave who accompanies thee be spared to thee, to be thy Queen.

ANTIOCHUS.—It was her desire—hers, noble Aurelian, not mine.

AURELIAN.—But didst thou not engage to her as much?

ANTIOCHUS.—Truly I did. But among princes such words are but politic ones: that is well understood. Kings marry for the state. I would be higher matched. (*He looks significantly toward Julia.*) Am I understood? (*There is*

silence a moment.) The Princess Julia I would raise to the throne. (*He seems to swell in importance.*)

AURELIAN (*turning away towards the Queen and then towards his officers and attendants.*)—Do I understand thee? I understand thee to say that for the bestowment of the favors and honors thou hast named, thou wilt do the things thou hast now specifically promised? Is it not so?

ANTIOCHUS.—It is, gracious king.

AURELIAN.—Dost thou swear it?

ANTIOCHUS.—I swear it by the great God of Light.

AURELIAN (*His countenance becomes black with fury and contempt. Antiochus starts and turns pale*).—Romans, pardon me for so abusing your ears! And you, our royal captives! I knew not that such baseness lived—still less that it was here.—(*Turning to Antiochus.*) Thou foul stigma upon humanity! Why opens not the earth under thee, but that it loathes and rejects thee! Is a Roman like thee, dost thou think, to reward thy unheard of treacheries? Thou knowest no more what a Roman is, than what truth and honor are.—Soldiers! seize yonder miscreant, write traitor on his back, and spurn him forth the camp. His form and his soul both offend alike. Hence monster! (*Antiochus trembles all over, appeals to the Emperor's mercy, but a guard stops his mouth, and drags him away. His shrieks are heard in the distance.*) It was not for me to refuse what fate threw into my hands. Though I despise the traitorous informer, I could not shut my ear to the facts he revealed, without myself betraying the interests of Rome. But believe me, it was information I would willingly have spared. My infamy were as his, to have rewarded the traitor. Fear not, great Queen. I pledge the word of a Roman and an Emperor for thy safety. Thou are safe both from Roman and Palmyrene.

ZENOBIA.—What I have but now been witness of, assures me that in the magnanimity of Aurelian I may securely rest.

AURELIAN.—Guards, conduct the Queen to the palace set apart for her. (*He bows. Zenobia and Julia bow and go out followed by guard. Aurelian and officers then go out on other side.*)

ADVANCED DIALOGUES AND PLAYS

THE FRENCH DUEL.

Adapted from " A Tramp abroad," by Mark Twain.

CHARACTERS.

Gambetta, *a very tall, fleshy man, with black pointed beard and long straight moustache.*

Fourtou, *a small, thin man, adversary to* GAMBETTA.

Mark Twain, *thin, of medium height, with gray drooping moustache, second to* GAMBETTA.

Pompadour, *a tall, thin man, with long curled moustache and imperial, dressed like a dancing master and carrying gloves; second to* FOURTOU.

M. Noir, *a journalist.*

Surgeons, undertakers, police and a crowd.

Situation.—M. GAMBETTA, *and* M. FOURTOU *have quarreled in the French Assembly and the inevitable result is a great public duel.* MARK TWAIN *hears of the quarrel and immediately hurries to assist his friend,* M. GAMBETTA.

The dialogues occur in three places, in the reception room of M. GAMBETTA, *in a hotel parlor, where the seconds meet, and in a field.*

In the beginning GAMBETTA *is very quick and nervous, while* MARK TWAIN *is very slow and deliberate. They make a strong contrast.* M. FOURTOU *has nothing to say and only appears in the last scene.* M. NOIR *appears for only a minute and simply bows thanks.* M.

GAMBETTA *always has a memorandum book with him. In the last scene, as there is not room for thirty-five yards to be measured off on the platform, the two seconds should place a mark for* GAMBETTA *in plain sight on one side, and place* FOURTOU *out of sight opposite him.* FOURTOU *is so far away and the fog is so dense that* GAMBETTA *cannot see his adversary at all. Practically* GAMBETTA *fires into space and falls on* MARK TWAIN.

Scene I.

GAMBETTA *is stamping about his reception room as* MARK TWAIN *enters. He throws his arms round* MARK TWAIN'S *neck, kisses him on both cheeks, hugs him four or five times and seats him in his arm-chair.*

TWAIN.—I suppose you wish me to act as your second.

GAMBETTA.—Of course.

TWAIN.—You have drawn up your will?

GAMBETTA.—Oh, no, no, that will not be necessary.

TWAIN.—I shall insist upon it. I never heard of a man in his right mind going out to fight a duel without first making his will.

GAMBETTA.—I never heard of a sane man doing anything of the kind; but if you insist I will make it.—(*He walks in agitation back and forth a moment thinking deeply.*) —My friend, how do these words strike you for a dying exclamation—"I die for my God, for my country, for freedom of speech, for progress, and the universal brotherhood of man!"

TWAIN (*with some hesitation, shaking his head*).—That would require too lingering a death. It would be a good speech for a consumptive—It is scarcely suited to exigencies of the field of honor.——

GAMBETTA (*he has been mumbling over words to him-*

self and at last bursts out).—Well, how's this? "I die that France may live!"

TWAIN (*as if a little afraid of offending*).—That is better, but it does not seem to have much connection with the case.

GAMBETTA.—Oh, relevancy is of no consequence in last words; what you want is *thrill.* (*He pulls out his memorandum book and writes.*) "I—die—that—France—may —live!"

TWAIN (*after a moment's pause*).—The next thing in order is the choice of weapons.

GAMBETTA (*nervously*).—My friend, I am not well. I will leave that and the other details of the meeting to you. (*He goes out.*)

TWAIN (*looking after him with a calm smile*).—Just as I expected—steeped in a profound French calm!—Well, the weapons! (*Rises, goes to the desk and writes. He reads a few words aloud.*) SIR: M. Gambetta—accepts—M. Fourtou's—challenge——(*He folds up the note, puts it in an envelope, and seals it. He rises, finds his hat and gloves and goes out.*)

Scene II.

The Reception Room of a Hotel. M. POMPADOUR *is looking in a mirror adjusting his cravat when* MARK TWAIN *enters with a letter.*

TWAIN.—Are you M. Fourtou's second?

POMPADOUR.—I have that honor.

TWAIN.—Then this is for you. (*He hands him the note.*)

POMPADOUR (*he receives the note with a profound bow, turns to the furthest corner of the platform, opens note and reads aloud*).—"Sir:—M. Gambetta accepts M. Fourtou's challenge, and authorizes me to propose Plessis-Piquet as the place of meeting; to-morrow morning at daybeak as

the time; and axes as the weapons. I am, sir, with great respect, *Mark Twain.*" (*He shudders at the word "axes." He holds note folded in his hand, turns back to Twain and says solemnly.*) Have you considered, sir, what would be the inevitable result of such a meeting as this?

TWAIN.—Well, for instance, what *would* it be?

POMPADOUR.—Bloodshed!

TWAIN.—That's about the size of it. Now, if it is a fair question, what was your side proposing to shed?

POMPADOUR (*a shocked look comes over his face*).—Well, a—a—I will explain myself.—I spoke jestingly. A—a—I—and my principal would enjoy axes,—and—indeed, prefer them,—but such weapons are barred by the French code, and——

TWAIN.—And so I must change my proposal. (*He walks the floor a moment, then stops short.*) I propose Gatling guns at fifteen paces.

POMPADOUR (*shaking his head*).—The code is again in the way.

TWAIN.—Rifles! (*Pompadour shakes his head.*) Double-barreled shot guns! (*Another shake of the head.*) Colt's navy revolvers! (*Another shake. Twain reflects a moment.*) I suggest brick-bats at three-quarters of a mile.

POMPADOUR.—Ah, monsieur, I will submit this last proposition to my principal. (*He retires.*)

TWAIN (*looking round very much astonished*).—What?—That beats me! He probably never heard a joke.

POMPADOUR *re-enters.*

POMPADOUR.—Sir, my principal is charmed with the idea of brick-bats at three-quarters of a mile, but must decline on account of the danger to disinterested parties passing between.

TWAIN.—Well, I am at the end of my string, now. Per-

haps *you* would be good enough to suggest a weapon. Perhaps you have even had one in your mind all the time.

POMPADOUR.— Oh, without doubt, monsieur! (*He searches his pockets and mutters to himself.*) Now what could I have done with them? (*He brings at last from his vest pocket two small toy pistols. He hands them to Twain.*)

TWAIN (*He goes across the room uncertain what he holds.*) —Oh! Pistols! (*He hangs one on his watch-chain and returns the other. Pompadour now unrolls a postage stamp containing cartridges and gives one cartridge to Twain.*) Does this mean that our men are to be allowed but one shot apiece?

POMPADOUR.—Ah, monsieur, the French code allows no more.

TWAIN (*in despair at the French code*).—I beg you, go on. Suggest a distance—My mind is growing weak under this strain.

POMPADOUR.—Sixty-five yards.

TWAIN (*in great anger*).—Sixty-five yards, with these instruments? Squirt-guns would be deadlier at fifty. Consider, my friend, you and I are banded together to destroy life, not make it eternal.

POMPADOUR.—Ah, monsieur, make it fifty yards but sixty-five is better.

TWAIN.—There is no use in fighting at that distance. Put it thirty-five and I'll let you off.

POMPADOUR (*sighing and throwing up his hands in protestation*).—I wash my hands of this slaughter; on your head be it. (*He goes out and then Twain goes out on the other side.*)

Scene III.

As in Scene I. the Reception Room of M. Gambetta. GAMBETTA *is in great agitation and has just torn a hand-*

ful of hair out and laid it on the table as TWAIN *enters on the opposite side.*

GAMBETTA (*springing toward Twain*).—You have made the fatal arrangements,—I see it in your eye!

TWAIN.—I have.

GAMBETTA (*He leans on the table for support. He breathes heavily for a moment, then hoarsely whispers.*)—The weapon, the weapon! Quick! what is the weapon?

TWAIN.—This! (*He displays with some contempt the tiny pistol and Gambetta faints away. Twain tries in vain to raise him.*)

GAMBETTA (*mournfully, after he has come to*).—The unnatural calm to which I have subjected myself has told upon my nerves. But away with weakness! (*He rises to his feet.*) I will confront my fate like a man and a Frenchman. (*He assumes an attitude of statuesque sublimity.*) Behold I am calm, I am ready; reveal to me the distance.

TWAIN.—Thirty-five yards.

GAMBETTA (*he falls to the floor again, Twain rolls him over and pours a glass of water down his back, at last he revives, sits up and says*).—Thirty-five yards—without a rest? But why ask? Since murder was that man's intention, why should he palter with small details? But mark one thing: in my fall the world shall see how the chivalry of France meets death. (*He rises to his feet and after a pause speaks.*) Was nothing said about that man's family standing up with him, as an offset to my bulk? But no matter: I would not stoop to make such a suggestion; if he is not noble enough to suggest it himself, he is welcome to this advantage, which no honorable man would take. (*He sinks into a sort of stupor of reflection, from which he rouses himself.*) The hour,—what is the hour of the collision?

TWAIN.—Dawn, to-morrow.

GAMBETTA (*astonishea*).—Insanity! I never heard of such a thing. Nobody is abroad at such an hour.

TWAIN.—That is the reason I named it. Do you mean to say you want an audience?

GAMBETTA (*impatiently*).—It is no time to bandy words. I am astonished that Monsieur Fourtou should ever have agreed to so strange an innovation. Go at once and require a later hour. (*He waves his hand and goes out.*)

TWAIN (*he snatches his hat and rushes out of the opposite door only to encounter M. Fourtou's second. He backs courteously into the room and ushers in M. Pompadour, how is followed by another man, M. Noir*).—I beg your pardon sir, I was looking for you.

POMPADOUR.—I have the honor to say that my principal strenuously objects to the hour chosen, and begs you will consent to change it to half past nine.

TWAIN (*with a smile of great satisfaction*).—Any courtesy, sir, which it is in our power to extend is at the service of your excellent principal. We agree to the proposed change of time.

POMPADOUR.—I beg you to accept the thanks of my client.—(*He turns to the man behind him*)—You hear, M. Noir, the hour is altered to half past nine. (*M. Noir bows and departs.*)—(*To Twain*) If agreeable to you, your chief surgeons and ours shall proceed to the field in the same carriage, as is customary.

TWAIN.—It is entirely agreeable to me, and I am obliged to you for mentioning the surgeons, for I am afraid I should not have thought of them. How many shall I want? I suppose two or three will be enough?

POMPADOUR.—Two is the customary number for each party. I refer to "chief" surgeons; but considering the

exalted positions occupied by our clients, it will be well and decorous that each of us appoint several consulting surgeons, from among the highest in the profession. These will come in their own private carriages. Have you engaged a hearse?

TWAIN (*amazed*).—Bless my stupidity, I never thought of it! I will attend to it right away. I must seem very ignorant to you; but you must try to overlook that because I have never had any experience of such a swell duel as this before. I have had a good deal to do with duels on the Pacific coast, but I see now they were crude affairs. A hearse,—sho! we used to leave the elected lying around loose, and let anybody cord them up and cart them off that wanted to. Have you anything further to suggest?

POMPADOUR.—Nothing, except that the head undertakers shall ride together, as is usual. The subordinates and mutes will go on foot, as is also usual. I will see you at eight o'clock in the morning and we will then arrange the order of the procession. I have the honor to bid you a good day. (*He goes out with an elaborate flourish of his hand. Twain knocks on the inner door and soon Gambetta issues from it.*)

GAMBETTA.—Ah, back again! at what hour is the engagement to begin?

TWAIN.—Half past nine.

GAMBETTA.—Very good indeed. Have you sent the fact to the newspapers?

TWAIN (*in horror*).—Sir! If after our long and intimate friendship you can for a moment deem me capable of so base a treachery——

GAMBETTA.—Tut, tut! What words are these my dear friend? Have I wounded you? Ah, forgive me; I am overloading you with labor. Therefore go on with the

other details, and drop this one from your list. The bloody-minded Fourtou will be sure to attend to it. Or I myself—yes, to make certain, I will drop a note to my journalistic friend, Monsieur Noir——

TWAIN (*in great relief*).—Oh, come to think, you may save yourself the trouble; that other second has informed Monsieur Noir.

GAMBETTA.—H'm! I might have known it. It is just like that Fourtou, who always wants to make a display.

TWAIN.—Now if you wish me to take charge of your will——

GAMBETTA.—Oh, yes; yes, that will –a–a–a–(*he retires to the inner room*).

Scene IV.

The Duel—a Field—Thick Fog. The duellists sit very near the front of the platform, but as far apart as possible, with their backs towards the centre of the platform. Fourtou stares straight in front of him; GAMBETTA *studies diligently his memorandum book and mutters now and then* "I die that France may live." *Across the back of the platform file very solemnly two poet-orators with their funeral orations projecting from their coat pockets, surgeons with frightful cases of instruments, camp-followers, police and citizens. The two seconds consult a little to one side.*

POMPADOUR.—Let us place a mark here (*he is standing on the extreme side of the platform*) and then pace off the distance in that direction (*he points to the opposite side*).

TWAIN.—That suits me to a dot. (*They cross the platform in step and apparently continue on beyond. They come back and approach their principals.*)

TWAIN.—Monsieur Gambetta, are you ready?

GAMBETTA (*expanding to enormous width*).—Ready! let the batteries be charged. (*The two seconds load the pistols in plain sight of all concerned and then station Gambetta on the mark set for him, but march Fourton off the platform opposite Gambetta. Twain returns to his principal. A police officer now steps up to Twain and whispers in his ear.*)

TWAIN (*holding up his hand to stop proceedings*).—A delay is begged while these poor people (*a number have gathered in the centre of the back of the platform*) be put in a place of safety. Let them take position behind the duellists.—(*He turns to his principal who has turned about and seems disheartened.*) Indeed, sir, things are not as bad as they seem. Considering the character of the weapons, the limited number of shots allowed, the generous distance and the added fact that one of the combatants is one-eyed and the other cross-eyed and near-sighted, it seems to me that this conflict need not necessarily be fatal. There are chances that both of you survive. Therefore cheer up; do not be downhearted.

GAMBETTA.—I am myself again; give me the weapon. (*He receives the tiny thing in his great palm and shudders.*) Alas, it is not death I dread but mutilation.

TWAIN.—Sir, you have every reason to expect the most honorable treatment from all concerned. You have every hope of success. Be heartened and stand firm.

GAMBETTA (*encouraged*).—Let the tragedy begin. Stand at my back; do not desert me in this solemn hour, my friend.

TWAIN.—I promise. (*He assists him to point the pistol.*) Now listen to the whoop of the other second. (*He props himself against Gambetta's back and shouts*) Whoop-ee!

(*This is answered by a faint whoop in the distance.*)—One,—two,—three,—fire! (*The two tiny pistols go off with a* SPIT! SPIT! *and Twain is crushed down to the floor beneath the enormous weight of Gambetta.*)

GAMBETTA (*with haste and confusion*).—I die——for——perdition take it, what *is* it I die for?——oh, yes,—FRANCE! I die that France may live! (*The surgeons swarm round Gambetta with probes and microscopes but find no wound. He rises, rushes into the arms of his adversary. Everybody embraces his neighbor except Twain, who raises himself disconsolately on one hand and looks round with agony in his face. The surgeons soon come to him and knead him over, withdraw to one side for consultation, make some motions and some men pick him up. A procession is formed with Twain, thus carried, at the head. For an instant they halt while Gambetta says distinctly, pointing to Twain.*)

GAMBETTA.—I am proud to know the only man who has been hurt in a French duel in forty years. (*The procession then goes out.*)

MRS. HARDCASTLE'S JOURNEY.

Adapted from "She Stoops to Conquer," by Oliver Goldsmith.

CHARACTERS.

Hastings, *a well dressed, polite young man from the city.*

Tony, *a big, awkward youth from the country, rough and coarsely dressed.*

Mr. Hardcastle, *a hearty out-spoken farmer, vigorous in mind and body.*

Mrs. Hardcastle, *a nervous excitable woman in gaudy attire, spattered with mud and water.*

Situation.—MRS. HARDCASTLE *objects to the attentions which* HASTINGS *pays her niece* CONSTANCE NEVILLE. *In order to separate them she orders* TONY, *although the night is dark, to drive* CONSTANCE *and herself to his* AUNT PEDIGREE'S, *twenty miles away.* TONY *in the interest of* HASTINGS, *who has planned to elope with* CONSTANCE, *plays a trick on the ladies and lands them at the foot of their own garden. His hard drive of three hours has so tired his mother's horses that it is impossible to pursue the eloping couple.*

Scene.—The back of a garden.

Enter HASTINGS, *looking round for some one.*

HASTINGS.—What an idiot I am to wait here for a fellow who probably takes delight in mortifying me! He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. (*He*

starts away but stops.) What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY *with high top boots, spattered with mud.* My honest squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

TONY.—Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by the by, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

HASTINGS.—But how? Where did you leave your fellow travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

TONY.—Five-and-twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it. Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such *varment.*

HASTINGS.—Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

TONY.—Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

HASTINGS.—This is a riddle.

TONY.—Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

HASTINGS.—I'm still astray.

TONY.—Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place, but they can tell the taste of.

HASTINGS.—Ha, ha, ha! I understand: you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

TONY.—You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-Down Hill—I then

introduced them to the gibbet, on Heavy-tree Heath; and from that with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

HASTINGS.—But no accident, I hope.

TONY.—No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

HASTINGS.—My dear friend, how can I be grateful?—But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville: if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

TONY.—Never fear me. (*He hears a noise, looks off to the side of the platform and then speaks.*) Here she comes. Vanish! She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid. (HASTINGS *hurries out on one side while* MRS. HARDCASTLE *staggers in on the other.*)

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—Oh, Tony, I'm killed—shook—battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt, that laid us against the quickset hedge, has done my business.

TONY.—Alack! mamma, it was your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—I wish we were at home again, I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

TONY.—By my guess we should be upon Crackskull Common, about forty miles from home.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—Oh, lud! oh, lud! the most notori-

ous spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

TONY.—Don't be afraid, mamma! don't be afraid. Two of the five that were kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. (*He suddenly starts.*) Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No, its only a tree. Don't be afraid.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—The fright will certainly kill me.

TONY (*starting again*).—Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—Oh, death!

TONY.—No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma: don't be afraid.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

TONY (*aside*).—Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. (*To her.*) Ah! it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. An ill-looking fellow.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—Good Heaven, defend us! He approaches.

TONY.—Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough and cry—hem! When I cough, be sure to keep close. (*Mrs. Hardcastle hides.*)

Enter MR. HARDCASTLE, *looking round.*

HARDCASTLE.—I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. (*Tony steps away from his mother's hiding place to meet his father-in-law.*) Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

TONY.—Very safe, sir, at my Aunt Pedigree's. Hem!

MRS. HARDCASTLE (*she speaks to herself from behind the bush*).—Ah, death! I find there's danger.

HARDCASTLE.—Forty miles in three hours; sure that's too much, my youngster.

TONY.—Stout horses and willing minds make short journey, as they say. Hem!

MRS. HARDCASTLE (*she pops her head out*).—Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm!

HARDCASTLE.—But I heard a voice here; I shall be glad to know from whence it came.

TONY.—It was I, sir; talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in three hours was very good going—hem! As to be sure it was—hem! I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please—hem! (*He moves a little farther away from his mother's hiding-place.*)

HARDCASTLE.—But if you talked to yourself you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices and am resolved (*raising his voice*) to find the other out.

MRS. HARDCASTLE (*looking out*).—Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!——

TONY (*trying to detain him, getting in his way, etc*).—What need you go, sir, if I tell you—hem! I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem! I'll tell you all, sir——

HARDCASTLE.—I tell you, I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

MRS. HARDCASTLE (*running forward from behind*).—Oh, lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling! Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life; but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

HARDCASTLE.—My wife! as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come, or what does she mean?

MRS. HARDCASTLE (*kneeling*).—Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have; but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice; indeed, we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

HARDCASTLE.—I believe the woman's out of her senses. What! Dorothy, don't you know *me?*

MRS. HARDCASTLE (*she starts up to her feet*).—Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

HARDCASTLE.—Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door? (*To him.*) This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you. (*To her.*) Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry tree? and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live: I have caught my death in it. (*To* TONY.) And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

TONY.—Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

MRS. HARDCASTLE.—I'll spoil you, I will. (*She follows him as he hastens away off the platform.*)

HARDCASTLE.—There's morality however in his reply. (*He has a knowing look as he goes out.*)

A MATTER OF DUTY.

Adapted from "The Dolly Dialogues," by Anthony Hope.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Carter, *a well dressed man, rejected lover of* LADY MICKLEHAM.

Lady Mickleham, *a beautiful young lady just married to young* LORD ARCHIBALD MICKLEHAM.

Situation.—LADY MICKLEHAM *is back from her honeymoon. She has summoned* MR. CARTER, *a former suitor, to an afternoon tête-à-tête. She carries a fan and he has near him his hat. Her mother-in-law is referred to as the Dowager, a stern, uncompromising woman, who lives at The Towers.*

LADY MICKLEHAM *and* MR. CARTER *sit conversing with an afternoon tea-table between them.*

MR. CARTER.—I didn't know you were back.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Oh, we've been back a fortnight, but we went to The Towers. They were all there, Mr. Carter.

MR. CARTER.—All who?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—All Archie's people. The Dowager said we must get really to know one another as soon as possible. I'm not sure I like really knowing people. It means that they say whatever they like to you, and don't get up out of your favorite chair when you come in.

MR. CARTER.—I agree that a trace of unfamiliarity is not amiss.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Of course, it's nice to be one of the family.

MR. CARTER.—The cat is that. I would not give a fig for it.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—And the Dowager taught me the ways of the house.

MR. CARTER.—Ah, she taught me the way out of it. (*He picks up his hat which is on a chair near by.*) I do not, however, see how I can help in all this, Lady Mickleham!

LADY MICKLEHAM.—How funny that sounds!

MR. CARTER.—Aren't you accustomed to your dignity yet?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I meant from you, Mr. Carter. It wasn't that I wanted to ask you about. (*She sighs.*) It was about something much more difficult, you won't tell Archie, will you?

MR. CARTER (*putting down his hat*).—This becomes interesting.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—You know, Mr. Carter, that before I was married—oh, how long ago it seems!

MR. CARTER.—Not at all.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Don't interrupt. That before I was married, I had several—that is to say, several—well, several——

MR. CARTER (*encouragingly*).—Start quite afresh.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Well, then, several men were silly enough to think themselves—you know.

MR. CARTER (*cheerfully*).—No one better.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Oh, if you won't be sensible!—Well, you see many of them are Archie's friends, as well as mine; and of course they've been to call.

MR. CARTER.—It is but good manners.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—One of them waited to be sent for, though.

MR. CARTER.—Leave that fellow out.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—What I want to ask you is this—and I believe you're not silly, really, you know, except when you choose to be.

MR. CARTER.—Walk in the Row any afternoon, and you won't find ten wiser men.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—It's this. Ought I to tell Archie?

MR. CARTER.—Good gracious! Here's a problem!

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Of course. (*Opening her fan.*) It's in some ways more comfortable that he shouldn't know.

MR. CARTER.—For him?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Yes—and for me. But then it doesn't seem quite fair.

MR. CARTER.—To him?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Yes—and to me. Because if he came to know from anybody else, he might exaggerate the things, you know.

MR. CARTER.—Impossible!

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Mr. Carter!

MR. CARTER.—I—er—mean he knows you too well to do such a thing.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Oh, I see. Thank you. Yes. What do you think?

MR. CARTER.—What does the Dowager say?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I haven't mentioned it to the Dowager.

MR. CARTER.—But surely, on such a point, her experience——

LADY MICKLEHAM (*decisively*).—She can't have any. I believe in her husband, because I must. But nobody else! You're not giving me your opinion.

MR. CARTER (*after a moment's reflection, cautiously*).—Haven't we left out one point of view?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I've thought it over very carefully, both as it would affect me and as it would affect Archie.

MR. CARTER.—Quite so. Now suppose you think how it would affect them.

LADY MICKLEHAM (*a cup of tea half way to her lips*).—Who?

MR. CARTER.—Why, the men.

LADY MICKLEHAM (*putting down her cup*).—What a very curious idea!

MR. CARTER.—Give it time to sink in. (*He helps himself to another piece of toast and after a suitable time he leans back.*) Let me take my own case. Shouldn't I feel rather awkward——?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Oh, it's no good taking your case.

MR. CARTER.—Why not mine as well as another?

LADY MICKLEHAM (*laughing*).—Because I told him about you long ago.

MR. CARTER (*blandly, with a gesture of remonstrance.*)—Why not be guided—as to the others, I mean—by your husband's example?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Archie's example? What's that?

MR. CARTER.—I don't know; but you do, I suppose.

LADY MICKLEHAM (*sitting upright*).—What do you mean, Mr. Carter?

MR. CARTER.—Well, has he ever told you about Maggie Adeane?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I never heard of her.

MR. CARTER.—Or Lilly Courtenay?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—That girl!

MR. CARTER.—Or Alice Layton?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—The red-haired Layton?

MR. CARTER.—Or Florence Cunliffe?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Who was she?

MR. CARTER.—Or Millie Trehearne?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—She squints, Mr. Carter.

MR. CARTER.—Or——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Stop, stop! What do you mean? What should he tell me?

MR. CARTER.—Oh, I see he hasn't. Nor, I suppose, about Sylvia Fenton, or that little Delancy girl, or handsome Miss—what was her name?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Hold your tongue—and tell me what you mean.

MR. CARTER (*gravely.*)—Lady Mickleham, if your husband has not thought fit to mention these ladies—and others whom I could name—to you, how could I presume?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Do you mean to tell me that Archie——?

MR. CARTER.—He'd only known you three years, you see.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Then it was before——?

MR. CARTER.—Some of them were before.

LADY MICKLEHAM (*drawing a long breath*).—Archie will be in soon.

MR. CARTER (*taking his hat*).—It seems to me that what is sauce—that, I should say, husband and wife ought to stand on an equal footing in these matters. Since he has—no doubt for good reasons—not mentioned to you——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Alice Layton was a positive fright.

MR. CARTER.—She came last, just before you, you know. However, as I was saying——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—And that horrible Sylvia Fenton——

MR. CARTER.—Oh, he couldn't have known you long then. As I was saying, I should, if I were you, treat him as he has treated you. In my case, it seems to be too late.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I'm sorry I told him that.

MR. CARTER.—Oh, pray don't mind, it's of no consequence. As to the others——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I should never have thought it of Archie.

MR. CARTER (*with a smile*).—One never knows. I don't suppose he thinks it of you.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I won't tell him a single word. He may find out if he likes. Who was the last girl you mention?

MR. CARTER.—Is it any use trying to remember all their names? No doubt he's forgotten them by now—just as you've forgotten the others.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—And the Dowager told me that he had never had an attachment before.

MR. CARTER.—Oh, if the Dowager said that! Of course, the Dowager would know! (*He starts away.*)

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Don't be so silly, for goodness sake! Are you going?

MR. CARTER.—Certainly I am. It might annoy Archie to find me here when he wants to talk to you.

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Well, I want to talk to him.

MR. CARTER.—Of course, you won't repeat what I've——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—I shall find out for myself.

MR. CARTER.—Good-by. I hope I've removed all your troubles?

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Oh, yes, thank you. I know what to do now, Mr Carter.

MR. CARTER.—Always send for me if you're in any trouble. I have some exp——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Good-by, Mr. Carter.

MR. CARTER.—Good-by, Lady Mickleham. And remember that Archie, like you——

LADY MICKLEHAM.—Yes, yes; I know. Must you go?

MR. CARTER.—I'm afraid I must. I've enjoyed our talk so——

LADY MICKLEHAM (*with a slight start*).—There's Archie's step. (*He goes out.*)

CURTAIN.

PRIDE AGAINST PRIDE.

Adapted from "Donna Diana," by Westland Marston.

CHARACTERS.

Don Diego, *Duke of Barcelona.*

Don Cæsar, *son of a neighboring Duke.*

Don Luis, *cousin to* DON CÆSAR.

Perin, *a countryman of* DON CÆSAR, *and secretary and confidant to* DONNA DIANA.

Donna Diana, *daughter to* DON DIEGO.

Donna Laura, *cousin to* DONNA DIANA.

A Gentleman, a Lady, and other Court Attendants, Musicians.

Situation.—DON CÆSAR, DON LUIS *and others, come to the court of the Duke to win the hand of* DONNA DIANA, *for besides her remarkable beauty the successful suitor will gain the dukedom of Barcelona. To all she is cold and haughty, until* CÆSAR, *at the instigation of his countryman* PERIN, *assumes an attitude of utmost indifference to her charms. She determines to subdue his proud spirit. At the mask in the evening she manages to have* CÆSAR *for her partner, and all her arts are exercised to break through his cold exterior. Several times only the presence of* PERIN *prevents* CÆSAR'S *real passion from betraying him.*

The following scenes show DIANA'S *last effort to subdue* CÆSAR *through jealousy, and her final vain struggle to resist the power of her own love.*

There is but little furniture needed in the hall of the ducal palace where the action takes place.

Scene I.

Enter CÆSAR, *looking back regretfully. Then enter* PERIN *from other side, quietly.*

CÆSAR.—How hard is fortune. Changeful hearts like these
Secure their prize. I, constant, lose my own.

PERIN (*approaching*).—Moody again, prince, and your wild bird snared!

CÆSAR.—She is indeed a wild bird.

PERIN.— True she sits
And broods on that sweet egg she calls revenge;
But I'm mistaken, if love creep not forth,
When the time comes for hatching. Still keep firm;
She yet has one resource—one stratagem—
For which prepare yourself.

CÆSAR.— What's that?

PERIN.— She'll try
To make you jealous. Mind whate'er she feigns
You credit not a jot.

CÆSAR.—I'm on my guard.

PERIN.—'Tis her last chance; but see, she comes!
(*They look away towards the approaching princess.*)

CÆSAR (*enchanted*).— The princess!
How airy is each movement. Like a goddess,
She rather floats than steps.

PERIN.— Again these raptures!
They're dangerous. Retire till you subdue them.

No—no—I say; you shan't give battle yet. (*Perin, with some difficulty, pushes Don Cæsar off on one side.*)

Enter DONNA DIANA, *in deep thought, stopping in the centre. Music is heard in the distance.*

DIANA (*gravely to Perin, who has withdrawn to the back of the stage*).—What means this absurd ditty, "Laura! Laura!"

Nothing but "Laura!" What insipid folly!

PERIN.—But still it spreads. The men are wild with love.

And (you've observed it, madam) love's poor dupes
Take instantly to music. Sing they must;
And, as you will not let them sing—Diana,
They choose some meaner name. 'Tis sad, but natural.
(*More music is heard.*)

DIANA.—Again! (*Scornfully, as if vexed to be neglected.*) How grand! How overpowering! Is it not?

PERIN.—Yet folly has its use. A world all wisdom
Might become tiresome.

DIANA (*thoughtfully*).—Perhaps you're right,
And, had Don Cæsar mingled in this trifling,
I scarce had blamed him. Not that I desire it.
Thank heaven! I'm not assailed with songs from him.

PERIN (*aside*).—Joy, joy! The bird is caught.
(*Aloud.*) As for Don Cæsar,
Remember you released him from his duties.

DIANA.—I bade him go.

PERIN.— And so he went, of course.

DIANA.—Why say "of course?" Had he possessed one spark
Of spirit he had stayed.

PERIN.— And disobeyed you?

DIANA.—There are some virtues higher than obedience.

PERIN (*aside*).—Oh, my rare system!

DIANA.— Had he pressed his right
To attend on me, perhaps I should have yielded.

PERIN.—"Perhaps!" ay, there's the point. This grave, cold prince
Takes words in their strict sense. If you say, go,
He deems not you mean stay. He sadly lacks
Perception, and the art of reading women. (*Diana has an absent and melancholy look.*)
But see, the princes with their ladies come;
All look absurdly happy.

DIANA (*looking toward them*).—And Don Cæsar
Comes with them.

PERIN.— But their childish ecstasies
Are lost on him, your highness; be it ours
With calm, superior eyes to note afar
The lot of frail humanity. (*They withdraw to side.*)

Enter LUIS *and* LAURA, *another gentleman and lady, followed by* CÆSAR.

LUIS (*to Laura*).—Fortune has smiled on me to-day; would Laura
Smile too, I'd ask no further boon of fortune.

LAURA.—The custom of the mask makes you gallant. (*They retire a few steps, while he speaks urgently to her.*)

GENTLEMAN (*to lady*).—Do not think
The usage of this night extorts my homage:
Your loveliness compels it.

LADY.— I would fain
Believe you; but you flatter. These love-fires
Shoot up too suddenly.

GENTLEMAN.— Be you less lovely,
And I shall be less ardent. (*He kisses her hand, then converses apart.*)

DIANA (*aside to Perin*).—They've no words,
It seems, to waste on me.

PERIN (*to Diana*).—I could forgive
All but Don Cæsar. Look now how he stands,—
Embodied apathy! Oh, I could box
His ears with pleasure. (*Turns aside to laugh.*)

LUIS.—What say you—shall we once more to the ball?

GENTLEMAN.—Agreed; let us enjoy even to the last,
These love-winged hours. (*The gentlemen lead their ladies away. Cæsar stands in abstraction.*)

DIANA (*with affected scorn, to Perin*).—They're swimming in a very sea of bliss!

PERIN.—Young blood, young blood! They're not philosophers
Like you and me, your highness. (*Cæsar seems to awaken from his reverie, turns to follow the others. He pretends to see Diana for the first time, bows respectfully and continues out.*)

DIANA (*aside*).— What, Don Cæsar
Goes too! he sees me and he goes! I'll try
My last and keenest weapon—jealousy.
(*Aloud.*) Call him back, Perin.

PERIN.— Prince! prince!

CÆSAR (*gravely*).— Did you call?

PERIN.—I did, my lord.

CÆSAR.— Some other time. At present
I'm in the train of love.

DIANA (*quickly*).—You love?

CÆSAR.— My freedom.

DIANA.—You mean, then, that you do not love at all.
Freedom's a mere ideal; but love needs
An outward object.
CÆSAR.— Princess, pardon me,
As you ne'er loved, you can't tell what love needs.
I really can't permit you an opinion
Upon that point. (*Perin rubs his hands with delight.*)
DIANA (*significantly*).—I may be more entitled
To give one than you think.
CÆSAR (*starting involuntarily*).—You love, then?
DIANA (*aside*).— Ha?
He started! (*Aloud.*) It were rash to say I love;
But I confess my former views of love
Are somewhat shaken.
PERIN (*aside*).— Somewhat.
CÆSAR (*with forced composure*).—Will you deign
To tell me why?
DIANA (*assuming earnest frankness*).—Yes, prince, 'tis only just,
As you have shared those views. Then thus I feel:
'Twere selfish to oppose my private will
Against a nation's hope, a father's prayers.
To these I therefore yield; and, though my heart
As yet is free, since I must take a husband,
I've cast my eyes upon your cousin Luis,
Prince of Béarne.
PERIN (*aside to Diana*).—That hit was fatal. (*Aside to Cæsar.*) Nonsense! (*Cæsar looks oppressed.*)
DIANA.—'Tis my resolution
Therefore to choose him. Could I choose more fitly?
(*A pause.*) Speak! love deludes not you. What's your opinion?
You do not answer. Is my choice unwise?

(*Aside, exultingly.*) He's pale and speechless. Yes, at last, at last!

PERIN (*apart to Cæsar*).—Shame, prince; is this your firmness?

DIANA.— Why, Don Cæsar,
You seem astonished.

CÆSAR (*recovering himself*).—Seem? I am astonished.

DIANA.—At what?

CÆSAR (*fully self-possessed*).—That there should be two beings so alike
As you and I; not only do we think
And feel as one, but it appears our thoughts
And feelings change together. We are twins,
If not by birth, by nature. Tell me, princess,
How long is't since you took this resolution?

DIANA (*confused*).—Only to-night.

CÆSAR (*eagerly*).—The hour?

DIANA (*surprised*).—The hour! (*Perin, also surprised, listens eagerly.*)

CÆSAR.— Was it not
Upon the stroke of nine? For then precisely
I took the very self-same resolution
And for the self-same cause. (*Looking at her insinuatingly.*) To gratify
My father and the state I choose a bride.

DIANA (*aside, pleased and softened*).—He means myself. Why else the agitation
He lately showed? I feel a strange relenting.
(*Aloud.*) Prince, as I freely gave my confidence,
I look for yours. Who is the happy fair?

CÆSAR (*tenderly*).—I fear to tell; but thus far I may venture:
She's of near kin to Barcelona's duke.

DIANA (*aside, delighted*).—That's to my father!
(*Aloud.*) Smiles she on your suit?

CÆSAR.—She might, would you befriend it. (*Perin makes a gesture of annoyance.*)

DIANA (*aside, with suppressed exultation*).—Just so. (*Aloud.*)—Really?
Who can it be?

CÆSAR.—You have not far to seek.

DIANA (*very graciously*).—Speak boldly, prince; her name?

CÆSAR.—Her name is Laura.

DIANA (*confused*).—What! who?

CÆSAR.—Your highness' cousin, Donna Laura.

PERIN (*aside*).—Jove, what a move! It takes away one's breath. (*Diana is struck dumb.*)

CÆSAR.—I feared Don Luis had secured my prize;
But, princess, you by choosing him have rid me
Of this great danger. Thanks, a thousand thanks!
Well, is my choice approved? (*A pause.*) You do not answer,
What ails your highness?

DIANA.—Ails me? Ails me! Nothing.

CÆSAR (*pretending anxiety*).—You're pale! you tremble; something's wrong.

DIANA.— Once more,
I tell you nothing;—nothing but amazement
That you should see a goddess in a woman
So commonplace, so tame, so plain——(*Checks herself.*)

CÆSAR.— As Laura?

DIANA (*aside*).—Oh, what a wretch am I thus to miscall
My gentle cousin. (*Aloud.*) Prince, you've shown discernment,
Laura has every virtue.

CÆSAR.— So I think.
She's modest, sweet, accomplished, winning, graceful——
DIANA (*interrupting*).—But very commonplace.
CÆSAR.— Oh, there I differ——
DIANA (*impatiently breaking off the talk*).—'Tis like you may be right. 'Tis an affair
Of taste: you follow yours; I mine. (*She turns away to hide her agitation.*)
CÆSAR (*to Perin*).—That sounds
Decisive.
PERIN (*to Cæsar*).—To it again,
The fort is silenced.
CÆSAR.— Princess, with your leave,
I now withdraw. (*He bows as if to go.*)
DIANA (*turning quickly*).—To your sweet Laura?
CÆSAR.—Yes. (*He looks back, pretends to see Laura passing, and feigns rapture.*)
See where she passes, O enchanting vision!
Where all contrasting graces harmonize,
Meekness with dignity.
DIANA (*interrupting ironically*).—Go on! go on!
You have not done. This is the prelude only,
The first faint note of praise before the chorus.
What is there so bewitching in your idol?
CÆSAR.—In Laura, do you ask?
DIANA (*aside*).— 'Tis base in me
To wrong her thus. (*She calms herself by a strong effort.*)
Prince, Laura is my friend—dear as a sister,
Though your gross adulation roused my anger,
I here retract each syllable I spoke
In her dispraise. You're right. Go—go to Laura.
CÆSAR.—I fly; her sanction gained, I'll then entreat
Your father's to confirm it. Finally,

To crown this night's rejoicing, I'll tell Luis
What happiness your highness destines for him. (*He bows gravely and goes out. Diana stands motionless.*)

PERIN (*aside, looking after Cæsar*).—Played to perfection!

DIANA.—The abyss of shame
Is fathomed. He can love, but loves another. (*She sinks into a chair. Perin approaches.*)
The thought is torture. (*Perin sighs.*) Perin!

PERIN (*sympathizingly*).—Yes, your highness.

DIANA (*without looking up*).—Comes he not back?

PERIN.— Back! After offering
So gross an insult to you!

DIANA.— Perin, peace!
I'm not myself; I'm wretched!

PERIN.— Noble lady,
Be calm. Did any see you thus but Perin
He might almost conclude your highness felt—(*He hesitates.*)

DIANA.—Felt what?

PERIN.— If I must speak, the pangs of love.

DIANA (*trembling*).—The pangs of love!

PERIN.— Be calm, I beg. Of course
It can't be love you feel; but then, what is it?

DIANA.—I know not. All's distraction. Now I melt
In grief, now burn with hatred. I hate Laura;
I hate Don Cæsar. Most of all I hate
Myself for hating them.

PERIN.— Worse than I thought!
This is not love alone: 'tis jealousy!

DIANA (*starting up, enraged*).—Jealousy, minion! To my face! I jealous?

PERIN (*soothingly*).—Your highness!

DIANA (*with passionate excitement*).—Quit my presence.
Not a word.
You tamper with your life. (*Perin withdraws in pretended alarm. Diana, who has lost all self-control, stands still a moment, then covers her face with her hands and hurries off the stage.*)
PERIN.— Poor flutterer!
Vain are thy struggles; thou art in the net. (*He goes out.*)

Scene II.

Enter DIANA, *wrapped in thought.*

DIANA.—Bound to Don Luis! I'll redeem my pledge.
Cæsar, if thou hast guessed my love, this hour
Shall show thee I subdued it. With unfaltering step
I'll walk to doom, a princess, though a victim. (*She retires to the back, and sits apart with an air of lofty abstraction.*)

Enter CÆSAR *and* PERIN. *They advance to the front.*

CÆSAR.—Can I believe you, Perin?
PERIN (*seeing Diana and speaking cautiously apart.*)
—Hush; she's here.
Yes, prince, she loves you fondly, desperately;
She has confessed it.
CÆSAR.— Let me then——
PERIN.— Not yet.
A word might ruin all. The Duke himself
Is privy to our plot, and comes to crown it. (*A flourish of trumpets announces the approach of the Duke.*)

Enter DUKE, LUIS, LAURA, *and other gentlemen and ladies of the Court.*

DUKE (*glancing at Diana*).—No tidings, princes, more
than these could bless

A father's ear. My people and myself
May well rejoice. Daughter, your choice is known;
But it befits this high solemnity
That you in form record it. Bid your bridegroom
Now lead you forth.

DIANA (*resolutely*).—Don Luis.

LUIS (*aside, confounded*).—How! The jest
Grows serious. She can't mean it.

CÆSAR (*alarmed, to Perin*).—What's this, Perin?

LAURA (*agitated, to Perin*).—Perin! (*Others also show amazement.*)

DIANA.—I wait, Don Luis.

LUIS (*aside*).—Heavens! I'm lost. (*He advances to Diana.*)

PERIN (*to Cæsar and Laura*).—I tremble; but the game's not over.

DIANA (*advancing to the Duke, hand in hand with Luis*).—Father,
Pronounce the form.

DUKE (*surprised*).—Diana.

PERIN (*to Cæsar*).— Catch her eye, prince!
Quick, quick! (*Cæsar approaches Diana.*)

DIANA (*to Duke*).—Pronounce the form.

DUKE.— Repeat it
As I proceed, thus—*You, Diana, daughter*
Of Don Diego.

DIANA (*with a low, constrained tone*).—*I, Diana, daughter*
Of Don Diego.

DUKE.—*Duke of Barcelona,*
And heiress to the Duchy.

DIANA.— *Duke of Barcelona,*
And heiress— (*She catches Cæsar's eye and stops.*)

DUKE.—*To the Duchy.* You forget.
DIANA.—Ay. *To the Duchy.*
DUKE.— *Here espouse Don Luis*
DIANA (*looking fixedly at Luis*).—*Here—here—espouse—espouse*——(*She stops short.*)
DUKE.— How now, you falter.
DIANA (*aside*).—My doom at hand, no rescue, no escape. (*She turns suddenly and observes Luis.*)
Look, look, his head is bowed! He stands like marble.
Is this a bridegroom's aspect? Hear me, Luis,
If without love you claim me, you commit
A wrong past pardon. If you would retract,
And choose some dearer mate, declare it—answer.
LUIS.—I'm bound to you by honor.
DIANA.— Ay, by honor,
But not by love. You do not say by love. (*A pause.*)
You cannot say it. Then I dissolve the bond. (*She quits his side.*)
LUIS.—Princess, it is your pleasure, I submit. (*He bows.*)
DUKE.—Don Luis, is this true? Your choice falls elsewhere? (*Short pause.*)
CÆSAR.—Duke, if I err not, yes. (*He leads Laura to Luis and joins their hands.*)
DIANA (*starting*).—How? Laura!
DUKE (*feigning surprise*).—Laura! (*To Cæsar.*) Prince, methought yourself
Were plighted to my niece.
CÆSAR.— Sir, in the mask
Just ended, I have worn your daughter's colors.
DUKE.—But the mask over, you are free.
CÆSAR.—Great duke,
I'm not impatient for my freedom.

DIANA (*who has listened attentively, starting*).—Ah!

DUKE.—How must I take you? Do you love my daughter?

CÆSAR (*gazing tenderly at her*).—I dare not say what might so much offend her.

DIANA (*leaving the rest and speaking aside*).—Am I so blest?

DUKE (*to Cæsar*).—You trifle, prince. Speak, some one——

DIANA (*gravely, with downcast eyes*).—The task be mine. Down, stubborn heart!—Subdued
And chastened to repentance, own thy sin,
Cast off thy vain disguise. If e'er I wed
I'll call him lord who vanquished pride by pride.

CÆSAR (*approaching her eagerly*).—And who is he?

DIANA (*vehemently. She raises her hand and he seizes it passionately*).—Tyrant, why ask! Thyself. (*She bursts into tears.*)

CÆSAR (*embracing her*).—Tyrant! Ah, no.
I have but conquered, sweet, the privilege
To be your slave for ever.

PERIN (*drawing a long breath*).—Safe in port!
I thought we should have foundered.

CURTAIN.

TOM AND ROXY.

Adapted from Mark Twain's "Pudd'nhead Wilson."

CHARACTERS.

Tom, *a very white negro, who has been well-educated and talks like a pure white.*

Roxy, *a negro as white as a Caucasian, mother of* TOM, *but using negro dialect.*

Situation.—ROXY *substituted her baby for a dead white baby and thereby got* TOM *reared as a gentleman. But his origin betrayed itself; he became a spendthrift, gambler and drunkard. For several years they have not met and each suspects the other is acquainted with his secrets.* ROXY *has lost all and seeks an allowance.*

The scene opens in an ordinary chamber with a sofa in it. TOM *is on the sofa with his feet in the air—to show his superiority to a negro.*

Scene I.

TOM *is on the sofa. Enter* ROXY.

ROXY.—My lan', how you is growed, honey! 'Clah to goodness, I wouldn't a-knowed you, Marse Tom! 'deed I wouldn't! Look at me good; does you 'member old Roxy?—does you know you' old nigger mammy, honey? Well, now, I kin lay down en die in peace 'ca'se I'se seed——

TOM.—Cut it short—cut it short! What is it you want?

ROXY.—You heah dat? Jes de same old Marse Tom,

al'ays so gay and funnin' wid de old mammy. I 'uz jes as shore——

TOM.—Cut it short, I tell you, and get along! What do you want?

ROXY (*after a moment of hesitation and despair*).—Oh, Marse Tom, de po' ole mammy is in sich hard luck dese days; en she's kinder crippled in de arms en can't work, en if you could gimme a dollah—on'y jes one little dol——

TOM (*jumping to his feet*).—A dollar!—give you a dollar! I've a notion to strangle you! Is *that* your errand here? Clear out! and be quick about it!

ROXY (*going slowly backward*).—Marse Tom, I nussed you when you was a little baby, en I raised you all by myself tell you was 'most a young man; en now you is young en rich, en I is po' en gitt'n ole, en I come heah b'lievin' dat you would he'p de old mammy 'long down de little road dat's lef' 'twix' her en de grave, en——

TOM (*not so harshly*).—I am not in a situation to help you and I'm not going to do it.

ROXY (*humbly*).—Ain't you ever gwine to help me, Marse Tom?

TOM.—No! Now go away and don't bother me any more.

ROXY (*raising her head slowly and becoming erect*).—You has said de word. You has had yo' chance, en you has trompled it under yo' foot. When you git another one, you'll git down on yo' knees en *beg* for it!

TOM (*with bluster*).—You'll give me a chance—*you!* Perhaps I'd better get down on my knees now! But in case I don't—just for argument's sake—what's going to happen, pray?

ROXY.—Dis is what is gwine to happen. I's gwine as straight to yo' uncle as I kin walk, en tell him every las' thing I knows 'bout you.

TOM (*scared—then with sickly smile*).—Well, well, Roxy

dear, old friends like you and me mustn't quarrel. Here's your dollar—now tell me what you know. (*Holding out a dollar bill.*)

ROXY.—What does I know? I'll tell you what I knows. I knows enough to bu'st dat will to flinders—en more, mind you, *more?*

TOM (*aghast*).—More? What do you call more? Where's there any room for more?

ROXY (*with a mocking laugh*).—Yes!—oh, I reckon! Co'se you'd like to know—wid yo' po' little ole rag dollah. What you reckon I's gwine to tell *you* for?—you ain't got no money. I's gwine to tell yo' uncle—en I'll do it dis minute, too—he'll gimme *five* dollahs for de news, en mighty glad, too. (*She starts away.*)

TOM (*seizing her skirts*).—Wait! Wait!

ROXY (*turning*).—Look-a-heah, what 'uz it I tole you?

TOM.—You—you—I don't remember anything.—What was it you told me?

ROXY.—I tole you dat de next time I give you a chance you'd git down on yo' knees en beg for it.

TOM (*stupefied*).—Oh, Roxy, you wouldn't require your young master to do such a horrible thing. You can't mean it.

ROXY.—I'll let you know mighty quick whether I mean it or not! You call me names when I comes here po' en ornery en 'umble, to praise you for bein growed up so fine en handsome, en tell you how I used to nuss you en tend you en watch you when you 'uz sick en hadn't no mother but me in de whole worl', en beg you to give de po' ole nigger a dollah for to git her som'n' to eat, en you call me names—*names*. Yassir, I give you jes one chance mo', and dat's *now*, en it las' on'y a half a second—you hear?

TOM (*on his knees*).—You see I'm begging, and it's honest begging, too! Now tell me, Roxy, tell me.

ROXY (*after a moment of deep satisfaction*).—Fine, nice young white gen'l'man kneelin' down to a nigger-wench! I's wanted to see dat jes once befo' I's called. Now, Gabr'el, blow de hawn, I's ready. . . Git up!

TOM (*rising*).— Now, Roxy, don't punish me any more. I deserved what I've got, but be good and let me off with that. Don't go to uncle. Tell me—I'll give you the five dollars.

ROXY.—Yes, I bet you will; en you won't stop dah, nuther. But I ain't gwine to tell you heah—

TOM.—Good gracious, no!

ROXY.—Is you 'feared o' de ha'nted house?

TOM.—N—no.

ROXY.—Well, den, you come to de ha'nted house 'bout ten or 'leven to-night, en climb up de ladder, 'ca'se de sta'r-steps is broke down, en you'll find me. I's a-roostin' in de ha'nted house 'ca'se I can't 'ford to roos' nowhers' else. (*Starts towards the door, but stops.*) Gimme de dollah bill. (*Scrutinizes it.*) H'm—like enough de bank's bu'sted. (*She goes out.*)

TOM (*opens the door for her, then flings himself on the sofa, sways back and forth and moans*).—I've knelt to a nigger-wench! I thought I had struck the deepest depths of degradation before, but oh, dear, it was nothing to this ——Well, there is one consolation, such as it is—I've struck bottom this time; nothing lower.

Scene II.

A room in the second story of a haunted house. Straw is in one corner; a little cheap clothing hangs up at one side; soap and candle boxes serve as seats. A lantern lights the room. Enter ROXY *and then* TOM.

ROXY.—Now den, I'll tell you straight off, en I'll begin to k'leck de money later on; I ain't in no hurry. What does you reckon I's going to tell you?

TOM.—Well, you—you—oh, Roxy, don't make it too hard for me! Come right out and tell me you've found out somehow what a shape I'm in on account of dissipation and foolishness.

ROXY.—Disposition en foolishness! *No*, sir, dat ain't it. Dat jist ain't nothin' at all, 'longside o' what *I* knows.

TOM.—Why, Roxy, what do you mean?

ROXY (*rising*).—I mean dis—en it's de Lord's truth, you ain't no more kin to ole Marse Driscoll den I is!—*dat s* what I mean!

TOM.—What!

ROXY.—Yassir, en *dat* ain't all! you's a *nigger!—bawn* a nigger en a *slave!*—en you's a nigger en a slave dis minute; en if I opens my mouf ole Marse Driscoll 'll sell you down de river befo' you is two days older den what you is now!

TOM.—It's a thundering lie, you miserable old blatherskite!

ROXY.—It ain't no lie nuther. It's jes de truth, en nothin' *but* de truth, so he'p me. Yassir—you's my *son*——

TOM.—You devil!

ROXY.—En dat po' boy dat you's be'n a-kickin' en a-cuffin' to-day is Percy Driscoll's son en yo' *marster*——

TOM.—You beast!

ROXY.—En *his* name's Tom Driscoll, en yo' name's Valet de Chambers, en you ain't *got* no fambly name, beca'se niggers don't *have* em! (*Tom springs up and seizes a billet of wood.*) Set down, you pup! Does you think you kin skyer me? It ain't in you, nor de likes of you. I reckon you'd shoot me in de back, maybe if you got a chance, for

dat's jist yo' style—*I* knows you, throo en throo—but I don't mind gittin killed, beca'se all dis is down in writin' en it's in safe hands, too, en de man dat's got it knows whah to look for de right man when I gits killed. Oh, bless yo' soul, if you puts yo' mother for as big a fool as *you* is, you's pow'ful mistaken, I kin tell you! Now den, you set still en behave yo'self; en don't you git up ag'in till I tell you!

Tom (*nervously*).—The whole thing is moonshine; now then go ahead, and do your worst; I'm done with you. (*Roxy silently takes the lantern and starts towards the door.*) Come back, come back! I didn't mean it, Roxy; I take it all back, and I'll never say it again! Please come back, Roxy!

Roxy (*gravely*).—Dat's one thing you's got to stop, Valet de Chambers. You can't call me *Roxy*, same as if you was my equal, children don't speak to dey mammies like dat. You'll call me ma or mammy, dat's what you'll call me—least ways when dey ain't nobody aroun'. *Say* it!

Tom (*with a struggle*).—Mammy!

Roxy.—Dat's all right. Don't you ever forget it ag'in, if you knows what's good for you. Now den, you has said you wouldn't ever call it lies en moonshine ag'in. I'll tell you dis for a warnin': if you ever does say it ag'in, it's de *las'* time you'll ever say it to me; I'll tramp as straight to de judge as I kin walk, en tell him who you is, en *prove* it. Does you b'lieve me when I says dat?

Tom (*with a groan*).—Oh, I more than believe it; I *know* it.

Roxy (*after sitting down*).—Now den, Chambers, we's gwine to talk business, en dey ain't gwine to be no' mo' foolishness. In de fust place, you gits fifty dollahs a month; you's gwine to han' over half of it to yo' ma. Plank it out!

TOM.—There's all I have in the world. (*Hands her six dollars.*) But I promise to start fair on next month's pension.

ROXY.—Chambers, how much is you in debt?

TOM (*with a shudder*).—Nearly three hundred dollars.

ROXY.—How is you gwine to pay it?

TOM (*groaning*).—Oh, I don't know; don't ask me such awful questions.

ROXY.—Yes, I aint gwine to be put off. I'm gwine to know.

TOM.—Well—eh—I've been about in disguise, and I've gathered small valuables from several houses; in fact, two weeks ago I made a good raid when folks thought I was in St. Louis. Still I doubt if I've sent away enough stuff to realize the amount, and the town is too excited to make another venture just yet.

ROXY.—Dat's just right en I'se gwine to help you.

TOM.—If you'd only leave the town, I should feel better and safer, because——

ROXY.—I aint troubled 'bout whah I'm livin' so' sn I git my money reg'lar.

TOM (*with a sigh of relief*).—Oh! You'll get it all right.

ROXY.—I don't hate you so much now, but I've hated you a many a year—and anybody would. Didn't I change you off, en give you a good fambly en a good name en made you a white gen'l'man en rich, wid store clothes on—en what did I git for it? You despised me all de time, en was al'ays sayin' mean hard things to me befo' folks, en wouldn't ever let me forgit I's a nigger—en—en—(*She falls to sobbing and breaks down.*)

TOM.—But you know I didn't know you were my mother; and besides——

ROXY.—Well, nemmine 'bout dat, now; let it go. I's gwine to fo'igt it. (*She rises and Tom also rises and hurries away with some show of respect.*) En don't ever make me remember it ag'in or you'll be sorry, *I* tell you.

CURTAIN.

A DISASTROUS ANNOUNCEMENT.

Adapted from "David Copperfield," by Dickens.

CHARACTERS.

Dora, *a beautiful blonde young lady, with curly hair.*

Miss Julia Mills, *a dark-complexioned young lady, somewhat older than* DORA.

David, *a young man very much in love with* DORA.

Jip, *a lap-dog belonging to* DORA.

Situation.—DAVID *is but recently engaged to* DORA, *who stays with a friend,* JULIA MILLS (*just disappointed in love*). DAVID *tries to explain to* DORA *his sudden loss of fortune with the following disastrous result.*

DAVID *is waiting when* DORA *appears with* JIP *in her arms.* DORA *drops* JIP, *greets her lover.*

DAVID.—My pretty little Dora is well and happy?

DORA.—Oh, yes, yes!

DAVID.—Dora, dear, could you love a beggar?

DORA (*stares at him a moment and then sits and pouts*).—How can you ask me anything so foolish? Love a beggar?

DAVID.—Dora, my own dearest, *I* am a beggar!

DORA (*slapping his hand*).—How can you be such a silly thing as to sit there, telling such stories? I'll make Jip bite you!

DAVID.—Dora, my own life, I am your ruined David!

DORA.—I declare I'll make Jip bite you, if you are so ridiculous. (*Looks at David and sees his face so serious that she begins to cry.*)

DAVID (*falling on his knees before her and caressing her*). —Don't, Dora, don't! You'll break my heart.

DORA.—Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, I am so frightened!

DAVID.—I didn't mean to frighten you, Dora.

DORA.—Where is Julia? Take me to Julia Mills.

DAVID.—Don't take on so, Dora. Won't you look at me?

DORA.—Julia! Julia! (*To David.*) Go away!

DAVID.—Give me just one glance. (*She looks at him reluctantly.*) You know I love you, oh, so dearly, dearest, but I feel it right to release you from our engagement, now, because I am poor. Oh, I could never bear to lose you. I have no fear of poverty, if you have none, dearest, for your dear face nerves my arm and inspires my heart. Oh, I am working now with a courage none but lovers know; but I have begun to be practical and to look into the future. You know a crust well-earned is sweeter far than a feast inherited. (*Dora has gradually become interested and is clinging to his hand.*) Is your heart mine still, dear Dora?

DORA.—Oh, yes! Oh, yes, it's all yours. Oh, don't be dreadful!

DAVID.—I, dreadful? To Dora?

DORA (*drawing closer*).—Don't talk about being poor, and working hard! Oh, don't, don't!

DAVID.—My dearest love, the crust well-earned——

DORA.—Oh, yes; but I don't want to hear any more about crusts! And Jip must have a mutton-chop every day at twelve, or he'll die!

DAVID.—Certainly, dearest, Jip shall have his mutton-

chop just as regularly as usual, but let me draw a picture of our frugal home made independent by my labor. My aunt shall have her room upstairs.—I am not dreadful now, Dora?

DORA.—Oh, no, no! But I hope your aunt will keep in her own room a good deal! And I hope she's not a scolding old thing!

DAVID (*after a pause in which he seems to be thinking hard*).—My own? May I mention something?

DORA (*coaxingly*).—Oh, please, don't be practical.—Because it frightens me so!

DAVID.—Sweetheart, there is nothing to alarm you in all this. I want you to think of it quite differently. I want to make it nerve you, and inspire you, Dora.

DORA.—Oh, but that's so shocking!

DAVID.—My love, no. Perseverance and strength of character will enable us to bear much worse things.

DORA (*shaking her curls*).—But I haven't got any strength at all. Have I, Jip? Oh, do kiss Jip, and be agreeable! (*She holds the dog up for both to kiss on each side of the centre of the nose and both laugh gayly.*)

DAVID (*after another pause*).—But Dora, my beloved, I was going to mention something.

DORA (*holding up her hands in childlike prayer*).—Oh, don't be dreadful any more!

DAVID.—Indeed, I am not going to be, my darling! But, Dora, my love, if you will sometimes think — not despondingly, you know; far from that!—but if you will sometimes think—just to encourage yourself—that you are engaged to a poor man——

DORA.—Don't, don't! Pray, don't! It's so very dreadful!

DAVID.—My soul, not at all! If you will sometimes

think of that, and look about now and then at your papa's housekeeping, and endeavor to acquire a little habit—of accounts, for instance——

DORA.—Oh! (*A sob.*) Oh!

DAVID.—It would be so useful to us afterwards. And if you would promise to read a little—a little cookery-book that I would send you, it would be so excellent for both of us. For our path in life, my Dora, (*eloquently*) is stormy and rugged now, and it rests with us to smooth it. We must fight our way onward. We must be brave. There are obstacles to be met, and we must meet and crush them——

DORA (*shrieks*).—Oh! You frighten me so! Julia! Julia Mills! Where are you? (*David approaches.*) Go away, please. (*He walks distractedly about the room and she faints.*)

DAVID (*as she falls back on the sofa*).—Oh! I have killed her this time. (*Sprinkles water on her face, then falls on his knees and plucks his hair.*) Remorseless brute! Ruthless beast!—Forgive me, forgive me! Oh, but look up at me! (*Goes to workbox for smelling-bottle but gets ivory needle-case instead and drops needles all over Dora. He shakes his fists at the barking dog and appears frantic.*)

Enter MISS MILLS.

MISS MILLS (*assists Dora*).—Who has done this?

DAVID.—*I*, Miss Mills! *I* have done it! Behold the destroyer!

MISS MILLS.—Is this a quarrel?

DORA (*revives; embraces Miss Mills*).—Oh! he is a poor laborer!—(*Seizes David's hand*). You must let me give you all my money to keep, will you?—Oh! Julia. (*Sobs.*)

MISS MILLS.—There, dear, every true man is a laborer. Run upstairs and dry your eyes. Don't be frightened at anything he has said. Tea will be ready presently. (*Dora goes out.*)

DAVID (*who has been walking about.*)—Miss Mills, I was trying to explain to Dora the sudden flight of my fortune, that I am now a poor man and must toil for my daily bread.

MISS MILLS.—The Cottage of Content is better than the Palace of Cold Splendor. Where love is, all is.

DAVID.—How true it is! Who should know it better than I, who love Dora with a love that never mortal has experienced yet.

MISS MILLS (*with despondency*).—It is well indeed for some hearts if this is so.

DAVID.—Oh, I beg to say that I referred only to mortals of the masculine gender. Miss Mills, I was anxious to have Dora observe the housekeeping, the accounts, and study a cook-book. Has my suggestion to her any practical merit?

MISS MILLS.—I will be plain with you. Mental suffering and trial supply, in some natures, the place of years, and I will be as plain with you as if I were a Lady Abbess.—No. The suggestion is not appropriate to our Dora. Our dearest Dora is a favorite child of nature. She is a thing of light and airiness and joy. I am free to confess that if it could be done, it might be well, but——(*shakes her head.*)

DAVID.—Then, Miss Mills, for Dora's sake, if you have the opportunity to lure her attention to such preparations for an earnest life, will you avail yourself of it?

MISS MILLS.—Oh, yes, gladly.

DAVID.—Might I ask you, too, to take charge of the

cook-book? And if you could insinuate it upon Dora's acceptance without frightening her you would be doing me a crowning service.

MISS MILLS.—I accept that trust, too; but I am not over sanguine. (*Dora now appears at the side and comes over to David.*) Let us go out to tea. (*They go out.*)

MISS JUDITH MACAN.

Adapted from " Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon," by Charles Lever.

CHARACTERS.

Sir George Dashwood, *a general in the British army, an elderly man, tall and commanding.*

Fred. Power, *captain of Dragoons, a younger man, bold and free, in uniform.*

Charles O'Malley, *a handsome young man.*

Frank Webber, *college chum of* O'Malley, *a great trickster, impersonating* Miss Judith Macan.

Miss Lucy Dashwood, *a beautiful young lady, daughter to* Sir George.

An Old Nobleman, a Young Officer, a Servant, and Guests.

Situation.—Sir George Dashwood *and his daughter give a ball, to which* O'Malley *is invited. Although* Frank Webber, O'Malley's *chum, and a great practical joker, has no invitation and scarcely has a speaking acquaintance with the* Dashwoods; *he lays a wager of two ponies with* Power *that he will be present and kiss* Miss Lucy.

Sir George *is fearless in war, but at home he lives in dread of his deceased wife's sister,* Miss Judith Macan, *whom he has not seen. She lives far in the country.*

The following dialogue is the scene at the ball in which WEEBER *impersonates* MISS MACAN, *and wins his bet. The scenes occur in the drawing-room of* SIR GEORGE, *in Dublin. A sofa is on one side. There are but few pieces of furniture in the room.*

MISS JUDITH MACAN *must be dressed in outlandish costume; she talks loudly, with a country accent.*

O'MALLEY *has just finished a quadrille with* MISS LUCY.

Scene I.

Enter MISS LUCY *and* O'MALLEY, *approaching the sofa on the opposite side of the platform, when* SIR GEORGE *enters hurriedly in great excitement.*

LUCY.—Dear papa, has anything occurred? Pray, what is it?

SIR GEORGE (*with a faint smile*).—Nothing very serious, my dear, that I should alarm you in this way; but certainly a more disagreeable mischance could scarcely occur.

LUCY.—Do tell me; what can it be?

SIR GEORGE.—Read this. (*He presents a dirty-looking note.*)

LUCY (*she glances at the note rapidly, after unfolding it, and then bursts into laughter*).—Why, really, papa, I do not see why this should put you out much after all. Aunt may be somewhat of a character, as her note evinces, but after a few days——

SIR GEORGE.—Nonsense, child; there is nothing in this world I have such a dread of as that confounded woman—and to come at such a time!

LUCY.—When does she speak of paying her visit?

SIR GEORGE.—I knew you had not read the note; she's coming here to-night, is on her way this instant, perhaps. What is to be done? If she forces her way in here, I shall

go deranged outright. O'Malley, my boy, read this note, and you will not feel surprised if I appear in the humor you see me.

O'MALLEY (*he takes note from Lucy*).—"Dear Brother,—When this reaches your hand I'll not be far off.—I am on my way up to town, to be under Dr. Dease for the ould complaint. Crowley mistakes my case entirely, he says it's nothing but religion and wind. Father Magrath, who understands a good deal about females, thinks otherwise—but God knows who's right. Expect me to tea, and with love to Lucy, believe me yours, in haste, JUDITH MACAN. Let the sheets be well aired in my room; and if you have a spare bed perhaps we could prevail upon Father Magrath to stop too." (*He laughs heartily and so does Lucy.*)

SIR GEORGE.—I say, Lucy, there's only one thing to be done; if this horrid woman does arrive, let her be shown to her room, and for the few days of her stay in town we'll neither see nor be seen by any one. (*He turns away.*)

Enter SERVANT *with* WEBBER, *disguised as* MISS JUDITH MACAN; *also* POWER *and others.*

SERVANT.—Miss Macan. (*A look of horror spreads over Sir George's face, while Lucy shrinks back.*)

SIR GEORGE (*stepping forward and taking her hand affectionately*).—Judith, I welcome you to Dublin.

WEBBER (*throwing his arms about Sir George's neck and giving him a hearty smack*).—Where's Lucy, brother? Let me embrace my little darling. There she is, I'm sure; kiss me, my honey. (*He kisses her very loudly. She leads him to the sofa where they sit and converse.*)

POWER (*touching Sir George lightly and speaking in a a low voice*).—Sir George, would it be too much—an introduction to Miss Macan?

SIR GEORGE.—Certainly, I'll introduce you, if you desire it. (*He approaches the sofa. The occupants rise.*) Miss Macan, I present Captain Power.

WEBBER.—I'm right glad to see you, Captain Power. (*He holds out his hand.*)

POWER (*he seizes hand and carries it to his lips*).—I hope you will do me the favor to dance next set with me, Miss Macan.

WEBBER.—Really, Captain, it's very polite of you; but you must excuse me; I was never anything great in quadrilles; but if a reel or a jig——

LUCY.—Oh, dear, aunt, don't think of it, I beg of you.

POWER.—Then, I'm certain you waltz?

WEBBER (*with resentment*).—What do you take me for, young man? I hope I know better. I wish Father Magrath heard you ask me that question, and for all your lace jacket——

LUCY.—Dearest aunt, Captain Power didn't mean to offend you; I'm certain he——

WEBBER.—Well, why did he dare to—(*sobs*)—did he see anything light about me, that he—(*more sobs*), oh, dear, oh, dear! Is it for this I came up from my little peaceful place in the West? (*Sobs.*) General, George, dear Lucy, my love, I'm taken bad. Oh, dear, oh, dear—is there any whiskey negus? (*Lucy and Power help Webber off, while others go after a restorative.*)

Scene II.

SIR GEORGE *and an old nobleman are conversing as* O'MALLEY *approaches. He waits a moment.*

NOBLEMAN.—True, upon my honor, Sir George, I saw it myself, and she did it just as dexterously as the oldest blackleg in Paris.

SIR GEORGE.—Why, you don't mean to say that she cheated?

NOBLEMAN.—Yes, but I do though—turned the ace every time. Lady Herbert said to me, "Very extraordinary it is—four by honors again." So I looked and then I perceived it—a very old trick it is; but she did it beautifully. What's her name?

Enter POWER *and* WEBBER (*alias* MISS MACAN), *conversing.*

SIR GEORGE (*seeing his supposed sister approaching and becoming confused*).—Some western name, I forget it.

NOBLEMAN.—Clever old woman, very. (*Sir George and the nobleman retire through door on opposite side. Webber goes out again through the door he entered, leaving O'Malley and Power on platform.*)

POWER.—I say, Charley, it is capital fun—never met anything equal to her. But the poor general never will live through it, and I am certain of ten days' arrest for this night's proceeding.

O'MALLEY.—Any news of Webber?

POWER.—Oh, yes, I fancy I can tell something of him, for I heard of some one presenting himself, and being refused entrance. So Master Frank Webber has lost his money. (*O'Malley goes out as Sir George did and Webber re-enters. To Webber*).—Upon my soul, you're an angel, a regular angel; I never saw a woman suit my fancy before.

WEBBER.—Oh, behave now, Father Magrath says——

POWER.—Who's he?

WEBBER.—The priest, no less.

POWER.—Oh! confound him.

WEBBER.—Confound Father Magrath, young man?

POWER.—Well, then, Judy, don't be angry. I only meant

that a dragoon knows rather more of these matters than a priest.

WEBBER.—Well, now, I'm not so sure of that. But anyhow I'd have you to remember it ain't a Widow Malone you have beside you.

POWER.—Never heard of the lady.

WEBBER.—Sure, it's a song—poor creature—it's a song they made about her in the North Cork.

POWER.—I wish to Heaven you'd sing it.

WEBBER.—What will you give me then if I do?

POWER.—Anything—everything—my heart, my life.

WEBBER.—I wouldn't give a trauneen for all of them. Give me that old green ring on your finger, then.

POWER.—It's yours. (*He places it gracefully on Webber's finger.*) And now for your promise.

WEBBER.—Maybe, my brother might not like it.

POWER.—He'd be delighted. He dotes on music.

WEBBER.—Does he, now?

POWER.—Upon my honor, he does.

WEBBER.—Well, mind you get up a good chorus, for the song has one, and here it is.

POWER (*he goes to door and raps*).—Miss Macan's song! Miss Macan's song. (*All except Sir George enter and call out, "Miss Macan's song."*)

WEBBER.*—"The Widow Malone."

Did ye hear of the Widow Malone
Ohone!
Who lived in the town of Athlone,
Alone!

Oh! she melted the hearts
Of the swains in them parts,

* If necessary this may be recited. The whole company should give the short lines of two syllables.

So lovely the Widow Malone
Ohone!
Of lovers she had a full score,
Or more!
And fortunes they all had galore
In store.
From the minister down
To the clerk of the crown,
All were courting the Widow Malone
Ohone!
All were courting the Widow Malone.

But so modest was Mrs. Malone,
T'was known
No one ever could see her alone,
Ohone!
Let them ogle and sigh,
They could ne'er catch her eye,
So bashful the Widow Malone
Ohone!
So bashful the Widow Malone.

Till one Mister O'Brien from Clare,
How quare?
It's little for blushin' they care
Down there;
Put his arm round her waist,
Gave ten kisses, at laste,
"Oh," says he, "you're my Molly Malone,
My own;"
"Oh," says he, "you're my Molly Malone."

And the widow they all thought so shy,
My eye!

Ne'er thought of a simper or sigh,
For why?
But "Lucius," says she,
"Since you've made now so free,
You may marry your Mary Malone,"
Ohone!
"You may marry your Mary Malone."

There's a moral contained in my song,
Not wrong;
And one comfort it's not very long,
But strong;
If for widows you die,
Larn to *kiss*, *not* to *sigh*;
For they're all like sweet Mistress Malone,
Ohone!
Oh, they're all like sweet Mistress Malone.

ALL.—Widow Malone, ohone!
Widow Malone, ohone!

SIR GEORGE *enters and while almost all turn toward him, and then go out, the following short dialogue takes place.*

POWER.—I insist on a copy of the "Widow," Miss Macan!

WEBBER.—To be sure; give me a call to-morrow; let me see, about two; Father Magrath won't be at home.

POWER.—Where, pray, may I pay my respects?

WEBBER.—Number 22, South Anne Street—very respectable lodgings. I'll write the address in your pocket-book. (*Power produces a card and a pencil. Webber writes a few lines.*) There, now, don't read it here before the

people. They'll think it mighty indelicate in me to make an appointment. (*Power puts card in his pocket.*)

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Carriage for Miss Macan. (*Sir George hurries over to her and helps her to the carriage. Servant goes out.*)

POWER (*to a young officer standing in a group near by*).—There is a conquest for you. Doubt it who will, she has invited me to call on her to-morrow—written her address on my card—told me the hour when she is certain of being alone. See here! (*He pulls out the card and hands it to the officer.*)

OFFICER.—So, this isn't it, Power.

POWER.—To be sure it is, man. Anne street is devilish seedy; but that's the quarter.

OFFICER.—Why, confound it, man, there's not a word of that here.

POWER.—Read it out. Proclaim my victory.

OFFICER.—"Dear P.—Please pay to my credit, and soon, mark ye, the two ponies lost this evening. I have done myself the pleasure of enjoying your ball, kissed the lady, quizzed the papa, and walked into the cunning Fred Power.

Yours, FRANK WEBBER.

The Widow Malone, ohone, is at your service."

All laugh. Lucy blushes and turns away. Power stamps and raves.

CURTAIN.

HELEN AND MODUS.

Adapted from "The Hunchback," by Sheridan Knowles.

CHARACTERS.

Helen, *a young lady, vivacious and beautiful.*

Modus, *her cousin, fresh from college and bashful.*

Situation.—HELEN *loves* MODUS *and perceives that he loves her. She has tried in vain to make him speak. At last she decides to tantalize him by her boldness until he declares his love.*

These scenes take place about two and a half centuries ago, in a castle which HELEN, MODUS, *and others are visiting under the management of* MASTER WALTER. *Just before the second scene* MASTER WALTER *has informed* HELEN *that a husband has already been chosen for her. The same setting may answer for both scenes, or the first may be in a parlor and the second in a wide corridor. In the first scene he must wear an old-fashioned ruff about his neck. In the second scene all chairs should be removed from the stage.*

Scene I.

Enter HELEN, *listlessly.*

HELEN.—I'm weary wandering from room to room;
A castle after all is but a house——

The dullest one when lacking company.
Were I at home I could be company
Unto myself.
I'll go to bed and sleep. No—I'll stay up
And plague my cousin into making love.
For, that he loves me, shrewdly I suspect.
How dull is he that hath not sense to see
What lies before him, and he'd like to find.
I'll change my treatment of him—cross him, where
Before I used to humor him. He comes,
Poring upon a book.

Enter MODUS, *slowly, with his eyes on his open book.*

What's that you read?

MODUS.—Latin, sweet cousin.

HELEN.— 'Tis a naughty tongue
I fear, and teaches men to lie.

MODUS.— To lie!

HELEN.—You study it. You call your cousin sweet,
And treat her as you would a crab.
You construe Latin, and can't construe that?

MODUS.—I never studied women.

HELEN.— No; nor men.
Else would you better know their ways; nor read
In presence of a lady. (*Strikes the book from his hand.*)

MODUS.— Right, you say
And well you served me, cousin, so to strike
The volume from my hand. I own my fault.
So please you, may I pick it up again?
I'll put it in my pocket.

HELEN.— Pick it up.
He fears me as I were his grandmother.
What is the book?

MODUS.— 'Tis Ovid's Art of Love.

HELEN.—That Ovid was a fool!
MODUS.— In what?
HELEN.— In that:
To call that thing an art which art is none.
MODUS.—And is not love an art?
HELEN.— Are you a fool
As well as Ovid? Love an art! No art
But taketh time and pains to learn. Love comes
With neither. Is't to hoard such grain as that
You went to college? Better stay at home
And study homely English.
MODUS.— Nay, you know not
The argument.
HELEN.—I don't? I know it better
Than ever Ovid did!
Suppose a lady were in love with thee,
Could'st thou, by Ovid, cousin, find it out?
Could'st find it out, wast thou in love thyself?
Could Ovid, cousin, teach thee to make love?
I could, that never read him. You begin
With melancholy; then to sadness; then
To sickness; then to dying—but not die!
She would not let thee, were she of my mind;
She'd take compassion on thee. Then for hope;
From hope to confidence; from confidence
To boldness—then you speak; at first entreat;
Then urge; then flout; then argue; then enforce;
Make prisoner of her hand; besiege her waist;
Threaten her lips with storming; keep thy word
And carry her! My sampler 'gainst thy Ovid! (*She crosses in front of him. He stands like a post.*)
Why cousin, are you frightened, that you stand
As you were stricken dumb? The case is clear

You are no soldier. You'll ne'er win a battle,
You care too much for blows!

MODUS.— You wrong me there.
At school I was the champion of my form
And since I went to college——

HELEN.—That for college! (*She crosses again and snaps her fingers.*)

MODUS.—Nay, hear me!

HELEN.—Well? What since you went to college? (*He hesitates.*)
What since you went to college? Was there not
One Quentin Halworth there? You know there was,
And that he was your master.

MODUS (*indignantly*).—He my master!
Thrice was he worsted by me.

HELEN.— Still was he
Your master.

MODUS.—He allowed I had the best!
Allowed it, mark me! Nor to me alone,
But twenty I could name.

HELEN.— And mastered you
At last! Confess it, cousin, 'tis the truth.
A proctor's daughter (*he turns away to think*) you did both affect—
Look at me and deny it! Of the twain
She more affected you;—I've caught you now.
An opportunity she gave you, sir—
Deny it if you can!—but though to others,
When you discoursed of her you were a flame,
To her you were a wick that would not light,
Though held in the very fire! And so he won her—
Won her, because he wooed her like a man,
For all your cuffings, cuffing you again

With most usurious interest. Now, sir,
Protest that you are valiant!
MODUS.— Cousin Helen!
HELEN.—Well, sir?
MODUS.— The tale is all a forgery!
HELEN.—A forgery!
MODUS.— From first to last: ne'er spoke I
To a proctor's daughter while I was at college.
HELEN.—It was a scrivener's, then—or somebody's.
But what concerns it whose? Enough, you loved her,
And, shame upon you, let another take her!
MODUS.—Cousin, I tell you, if you'll only hear me,
I loved no woman while I was at college—(*He catches himself.*)
Save one, and her I fancied ere I went there.
HELEN (*to herself*).—Indeed! Now I'll retreat, if he's advancing.
Comes he not on! Oh, what a stock's the man!—
Well, cousin?
MODUS (*blankly*).—Well? What more would'st have me say?
I think I've said enough.
HELEN.— And so think I.
I did but jest with you. You are not angry?
Shake hands! (*He coldly touches her fingers.*) Why, cousin, do you squeeze me so?
MODUS (*letting her go*).—I swear I squeezed you not!
HELEN.— You did not?
MODUS.— No,
I'll die if I did!
HELEN.— Why, then you did not, cousin:
So let's shake hands again—(*He takes her hand as before.*)
Oh, go, and now

Read Ovid! Cousin, will you tell me one thing:
Wore lovers ruffs in Master Ovid's time?
Behoved him teach them, then, to put them on:
And that you have to learn. Hold up your head.
Why, cousin, how you blush. Plague on the ruff!
I cannot give't a set. You're blushing still!
Why do you blush, dear cousin? So, t'will beat me!
I'll give it up.

MODUS.—Nay, prithee don't, try on!

HELEN.—And if I do, I fear you'll think me bold.

MODUS.—For what?

HELEN.— To trust my face so near to thine.

MODUS (*with blank stupidity*).—I know not what you mean.

HELEN.—I'm glad you don't?
Cousin, I own right well behaved you are.
Most marvelously well behaved! They've bred
You well at college. With another man
My lips would be in danger! Hang the ruff!

MODUS (*patronizingly*).—Nay, give it up, nor plague thyself, dear cousin.

HELEN.—Dear fool. (*Throws the ruff on the ground.*)
I swear the ruff is good for just
As little as its master! There!—'Tis spoiled—
You'll have to get another. Hie for it,
And wear it in the fashion of a wisp,
Ere I adjust it for thee. Farewell, cousin.
You've need to study Ovid's Art of Love. (*She flounces out.*)

MODUS.—Went she in anger? I will follow her.
No, I will not. Heigho! I love my cousin!
Oh, would that she loved me! Why did she taunt me
With backwardness in love? What could she mean?

Says she I love her, and so laughs at me,
Because I lack the front to woo her? Nay,
I'll woo her, then! Her lips shall be in danger,
When next she trusts them near me. Looked she at me
To-day, as never did she look before. (*He begins to read, pauses, and thrusts book into his bosom.*)
Hang Ovid's Art of Love! I'll woo my cousin! (*He goes out.*)

Scene II.

HELEN *and* MODUS *stand at opposite sides, make a long pause, then bashfully look at each other.*

HELEN.—Why, cousin Modus! What! Will you stand by
And see me forced to marry? Cousin Modus,
Have you not got a tongue? Have you not eyes?
Do you not see I'm very—very ill,
And not a chair in all the corridor?

MODUS.—I'll find one in the study. (*He starts out.*)

HELEN.— Hang the study!

MODUS.—My room's at hand. I'll fetch one thence. (*He starts off on other side.*)

HELEN.— You shan't!
I'll faint ere you come back!

MODUS.— What shall I do?

HELEN.—Why don't you offer to support me? Well?
Give me your arm—be quick! (*Modus offers his arm very stiffly.*) Is that the way
To help a lady when she's like to faint?
I'll drop unless you catch me. (*Falls against him.—He supports her.*) That will do;
I'm better now. (*He offers to leave her.*) Don't leave me! Is one well

Because one's better? Hold my hand. Keep so.—(*A pause.*)
Well, cousin Modus?
MODUS.— Well, sweet cousin?
HELEN.— Well
You heard what Master Walter said?
MODUS.— I did.
HELEN.—And would you have me marry? Can't you speak?
Say yes or no.
MODUS.—No, cousin.
HELEN.— Bravely said!
And why, my gallant cousin?
MODUS.— Why?
HELEN.— Ah, why!—
Women, you know, are fond of reasons—why
Would you not have me marry? (*He gives her a loving look.*) How you look!
You mind me of a story of a cousin
Who once her cousin such a question asked.
He had not been to college, though—for books,
Had passed his time in reading ladies' eyes,
Which he could construe marvellously well,
Thus stood they once together, on a day—
As we stand now—discoursed as we discourse,—
But with this difference,—fifty gentle words
He spoke to her, for one she spoke to him!
As now I questioned thee, she questioned him,
And what was his reply? To think of it
Sets my heart beating—'twas so kind a one!
So like a cousin's answer—a dear cousin!
A gentle, honest, gallant, loving cousin!
What did he say?

MODUS (*shaking his head*).—On my soul I can't tell.
HELEN.—A man might find it out,
Though never read he Ovid's Art of Love.
What did he say? He'd marry her himself!
How stupid are you, cousin! Let me go!
MODUS (*he holds her the more tightly*).—You are not well yet.
HELEN.— Yes.
MODUS.— I'm sure you're not.
HELEN.—I'm sure I am.
MODUS.— Nay, let me hold you, cousin!
I like it. (*He gazes at her.*)
HELEN.—How you stare!
What see you in my face to wonder at?
MODUS.—A pair of eyes!
HELEN.—And saw you ne'er a pair of eyes before?
MODUS.—Not such a pair.
HELEN.— And why?
MODUS.— They are so bright!
You have a Grecian nose.
HELEN.— Indeed?
MODUS.— Indeed!
HELEN.—What kind of mouth have I?
MODUS.— A handsome one.
I never saw so sweet a pair of lips!
I ne'er saw lips at all till now, dear cousin!
HELEN.—Cousin, I am well; you need not hold me now.
Do you not hear? (*She struggles a little.*) I tell you I am well!
I need your arm no longer—take't away!
So tight it locks me, 'tis with pain I breathe!
Let me go, cousin! Wherefore do you hold
Your face so close to mine? What do you mean?

MODUS.—You've questioned me, and now I'll question you.

HELEN.—What would you learn?

MODUS.— The use of lips?

HELEN.— To speak?

MODUS.—Naught else?

HELEN.—Why, other use know you?

MODUS.— I do.

HELEN.— Indeed!

You're wondrous wise! And pray what is it?

MODUS.—This! (*He attempts to kiss her, but she interposes her hand and pushes him away.*)

HELEN.—Soft! My hand thanks you, cousin,—for my lips

I keep them for a husband! (*Crosses.*) Nay, stand off!

I'll not be held in manacles again! (*He follows.*)

Why do you follow me?

MODUS.— I love you, cousin!

HELEN.—Oh, cousin, say you so? That's passing strange!

A thing to sigh for, weep for, languish for,

And die for!

MODUS.—Die for!

HELEN.— Yes, with laughter, cousin!

For, cousin, I love you!

MODUS.— And you'll be mine?

HELEN.—I will.

MODUS.— Your hand upon it.

HELEN.— Hand and heart.

Hie to thy dressing room, and I'll to mine——

Attire thee for the altar—so will I.

Whoe'er may claim me, thou'rt the man shall have me.

Away! Despatch! But hark you, ere you go,

Ne'er brag of reading Ovid's Art of Love .

MODUS.—And, cousin, stop ; one little word with you !

(*He beckons Helen over to him, snatches a kiss.—She runs off ; he takes the book from his bosom, which he had put there in former scene, looks at it and throws it down. He goes out by another door.*)

SAM WELLER AND HIS FATHER.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Pickwick, *a fleshy old gentleman, neatly dressed.*

Mr. Weller, *a stout man with a red nose, roughly dressed.*

Sam Weller, *young man, rather gaudily dressed.*

Situation.—Mr. Pickwick *and* Sam *have just seated themselves at a table in a tavern when the actions of a man across the room attract their attention.* Mr. Pickwick *is seated at the head of the table, his side to the audience*; Sam, *at a respectful distance away at the side of the table, facing the audience.* Mr. Weller *Senior faces* Mr. Pickwick *and sits smocking a pipe on the other side of the stage beside a small table on which is a pot of ale.*

Mr. Weller (*drinks from his pot of ale, sets it down, stares across at* Mr. Pickwick *and at* Sam, *shades his eyes with his hand, then speaks slowly*).—Wy, Sammy!

Mr. Pickwick.—Who's that, Sam?

Sam Weller.—Why, I wouldn't ha' believed it, sir. It's the old 'un.

Mr. Pickwick.—Old one, what old one?

Sam.—My father, sir. (*His father comes over.*) How are you, my ancient? (*Makes room for him on the seat beside him.*)

Mr. Weller.—Wy, Sammy, I ha'n't seen you for two years and better.

SAM.—No more you have, old codger. How's mother-in-law?

MR. WELLER.—Wy, I'll tell you what, Sammy, there never was a nicer woman as a widder, than that 'ere second wentur o' mine—a sweet creetur she was, Sammy; all I can say on her now, is, that as she was such an uncommon pleasant widder, it's a great pity she ever changed her con-di-tion. She don't act as a vife, Sammy.

SAM.—Don't she, though?

MR. WELLER (*with a sigh and a shake of his head*).—I've done it once too often. Sammy; I've done it once too often. Take example by your father my boy, and be wery careful o' widders all your life, specially if they've kept a public house, Sammy. (*He pauses, refills his pipe from a tin box he carries in his pocket, and commences smoking again at a great rate. Then he turns suddenly to Mr. Pickwick.*) Beg your pardon, sir, (*pause*) nothin' personal, I hope, sir; I hope you ha'n't got a widder, sir.

MR. PICKWICK.—Not I—(*Laughs while Sam whispers to his parent.*)

MR. WELLER (*taking off his hat*).—Beg your pardon, sir; I hope you've no fault to find with Sammy, sir?

MR. PICKWICK.—None whatever.

MR. WELLER.—Wery glad to hear it, sir; I took a deal o' pains with his eddication, sir; let him run in the streets when he was wery young, and shift for his-self. It's the only way to make a boy sharp, sir.

MR. PICKWICK.—Rather a dangerous process, I should imagine.

SAM.—And not a wery sure one, neither; I got reg'larly done the other day.

MR. WELLER.—No!

SAM.—I did. Reglar do, artful dodge.

MR. PICKWICK.—I don't think he'll escape us quite so easily the next time, Sam?

SAM.—I don't think he will sir.

MR. PICKWICK.—Whenever I meet that Jingle again, whenever it is, (*bringing down his fist on the table*) I'll inflict personal chastisement on him in addition to the exposure he so richly merits, I will, or my name is not Pickwick.

SAM.—And wenever I catches hold o' that there melancholly chap with the black hair, Job Trotter, if I don't bring some real water into his eyes, for once in a way, my name a'nt Weller.

MR. WELLER.—Worn't one o' these chaps slim and tall, with long hair, and the gift o' the gab wery gallopin'?

MR. PICKWICK (*doubtfully*).—Y—yes.

MR. WELLER.—T' other's a black-haired chap in mulberry livery with a wery large head!

MR. PICKWICK AND SAM. (*together*).—Yes, yes, he is.

MR. WELLER.—Then I know where they are, and that's all about it; they're at Ipswich, safe enough, them two.

MR. PICKWICK.—No!

MR. WELLER.—Fact and I'll tell you how I know it. I work an Ipswich coach now and then for a friend o' mine. I worked down the wery day arter the night as you caught the rheumatiz, and at the Black Boy at Chelmesford—the wery place they'd come to—I took 'em up, right through to Ipswich, where the man servant—him in the mulberries—told me they was a goin' to put up for a long time.

MR. PICKWICK.—I'll follow him; we may as well see Ipswich as any other place. I'll follow him.

SAM (*to his father*).—You're quite certain it was them, governor?

MR. WELLER.—Quite, Sammy, quite, for their appearance

is wery sing'ler; besides that 'ere, I wondered to see the gen'lm'n so formiliar with his servant; and more than that as they sat in front, right behind the box. I heerd 'em laughing, and saying how they'd done old Fireworks.

MR. PICKWICK.—Old who?

MR. WELLER.—Old Fireworks, sir; by which, I've no doubt, they meant you, sir.

MR. PICKWICK (*with an emphatic blow on the table*).—I'll follow him.

MR. WELLER.—I shall work down to Ipswich the day arter to-morrow, sir, from the Bull in White chapel; and if you really mean to go you'd better go with me. (*Moving away.*)

MR. PICKWICK.—So we had, very true. We will go with you. But don't hurry away, Mr. Weller; won't you take anything?

MR. WELLER (*stopping short*).—You're wery good, sir, perhaps a small glass of brandy to drink your health and success to Sammy, sir, wouldn't be amiss.

MR. PICKWICK.—Certainly not. (*Pours a glass of brandy, which Mr. Weller jerks down after pulling his hair to Mr. Pickwick and nodding to Sam.*)

SAM.—Well done, father, take care, old fellow, or you'll have a touch of your old complaint, the gout.

MR. WELLER.—I've found a sov'rin' cure for that, Sammy.

MR. PICKWICK.—A sovereign cure for the gout, what is it?

MR. WELLER.—The gout, sir, is a complaint as arises from too much ease and comfort. If ever you're attacked with the gout, sir, jist you marry a widder as has got a good loud woice, with a decent notion of usin' it, and you'll never have the gout agin. It's a capital prescription, sir. I takes it reg'lar, and I can warrant it to drive away any illness as is caused by too much jollity. (*Sighs deeply and goes out.*)

MR. PICKWICK.—Well, what do you think of what your father says, Sam?

SAM.—Think, sir! why, I think he's the wictim o' connubiality, as Blue Beard's domestic chaplain said, with a tear of pity, ven he buried him.

CURTAIN.

EXTRACTING A SECRET.

CHARACTERS.

Frau Fischer, *a fleshy woman of middle age.*

Herr Schmidt, *a young man.*

Situation.—*As the outcome of a quarrel at the shop of* HERR FISCHER, *a poor Count in his employ took off a musical doll. While the Count was eating in a restaurant a man at a neighboring table claimed that the doll had been stolen from him some months before. So much of a disturbance arose that the police were called in and all concerned were arrested and taken to the police station.*

HERR SCHMIDT, *employed in the same shop as the Count, hurries away to the home of* HERR FISCHER *in order to get him to prove property and rescue the Count from jail. The following scene shows the result of his endeavors.*

The dialogue takes place in the sitting-room of FRAU FISCHER. HERR SCHMIDT *is in the room and a moment later the Frau enters to learn his errand.*

HERR SCHMIDT.—Good evening, Frau Fischer. I would like to speak to your husband upon a little matter of business.

FRAU FISCHER.—He is not at home yet. I left him in the shop. (*Schmidt turns and hurries away.*) Wait a minute! What in the world are you in such a hurry about?

HERR SCHMIDT (*stopping suddenly*). — Oh—nothing—nothing especial.

FRAU FISCHER (*putting her hands on her hips and holding her head a little on one side*).—Well, I must say, for a man who is not in a hurry about anything, you are uncommonly brisk with your feet. If it is only a matter of business, I daresay I will do as well as my husband.

HERR SCHMIDT.—Oh, I daresay. But this is rather a personal matter of business, you see——

FRAU FISCHER.—And you mean that you want some money, I suppose.

HERR SCHMIDT.—No, no, not at all—no money at all. It is not a question of money. (*Begins to move away slowly.*)

FRAU FISCHER (*at first with a puzzled expression, then as if a new idea had come to her*).—Have you seen the Count?

HERR SCHMIDT (*in a doubtful tone of voice*).—Yes, I believe—in fact, I did see him—for a moment——

FRAU FISCHER (*smiling to herself*).—I thought so. And he has made some trouble about that wretched doll——

HERR SCHMIDT (*very much astonished*).—How did you guess that?

FRAU FISCHER.—Oh, I know many things—many interesting things. And now you want to warn my husband of what the Count has done, do you not? It must be something serious, since you are in such a hurry. Come, Herr Schmidt, have a cup of tea. Fischer will be home in a few minutes, and you see I have guessed half your story, so you may as well tell me the other half and be done with it. It is of no use for you to go to the shop after him. He has shut up by this time and you cannot tell which way he will come home, can you? Much better have a cup of tea. Everything is ready, so that you need not stay long. (*Schmidt after a good deal of hesitation sits down at a small table.*

Frau Fischer pours out two cups of tea at a little stand at the side of the room and carries them to the little table for herself and Herr Schmidt. She seats herself opposite to him.) The poor Count! He is sure to get himself into trouble some day. I suppose people cannot help behaving oddly when they are mad, poor things. And the Count is certainly mad, Herr Schmidt.

HERR SCHMIDT.—Quite mad, poor man. He has had one of his worst attacks to-day.

FRAU FISCHER.—Yes, and if you could have seen him and heard him in the shop this evening—(*holds up her hands and shakes her head.*)

HERR SCHMIDT.—What did he do?

FRAU FISCHER.—Oh, such things, such things! Poor man, of course I am very sorry for him, and I am glad that my husband finds room to employ him, and keep him from starving. But really, this evening he quite made me lose my temper. I am afraid I was a little rough, considering that he is sensitive. But to hear the man talk about his money, and his titles, and his dignities, when he is only just able to keep body and soul together! It is enough to irritate the seven archangels, Herr Schmidt, indeed it is! And then at the same time there was that dreadful music doll, and my head was splitting—I am sure there will be a thunder storm to-night—altogether, I could not bear it any longer and I actually upset the doll out of anger, and it rolled to the floor and was broken. Of course, it is very foolish to loose one's temper in that way, but after all I am only a weak woman, and I confess it was a relief to me when I saw the poor count take the thing away. I hope I did not really hurt his feelings, for he is an excellent workman in spite of his madness. What did he say, Herr Schmidt?

HERR SCHMIDT.—To tell the truth he did not like what you said to him at all.

FRAU FISCHER.—Well, really, was it my fault, Herr Schmidt, if I lose my temper once in a year or so? It is very wearing on the nerves. Every Tuesday evening begins the same old song about the fortune and letters, and the journey to Russia.

HERR SCHMIDT.—Do you think that Herr Fischer can have gone anywhere else instead of coming home? (*He has hurriedly swallowed his cup of tea.*)

FRAU FISCHER (*convincingly*).—Oh no, indeed. He always tells me where he is going. You have no idea what a good husband he is. Now I am sure that if he had the least idea that anything had happened to the poor Count, he would run all the way home in order to hear it as soon as possible. (*She takes his cup for more tea.*)

HERR SCHMIDT.—No more tea, thank you, Frau Fischer. (*Nevertheless she takes the cup and fills it again. Schmidt looks resigned.*) Thank you!

FRAU FISCHER.—Of course it is nothing so very serious, is it? I daresay the Count has told you that he would not work any more for us, and you are anxious to arrange the matter? In that case you need have no fear. I am always ready to forgive and forget, as they say, though I am only a weak woman.

HERR SCHMIDT.—That is very kind of you.

FRAU FISCHER.—I guessed the truth, did I not?

HERR SCHMIDT.—Not exactly.—The trouble is rather more serious than that. The fact is, as we were at supper, a man at another table saw the musical doll in our hands and swore that it had been stolen from him some months ago.

FRAU FISCHER (*with sudden interest*).—And what happened then?

HERR SCHMIDT (*regretfully*).—I suppose you may as well know. There was a row and the man made a great deal of trouble and at last the police were called in, and I came to get Herr Fischer himself to come and prove that the doll was his. You see why I am in such a hurry.

FRAU FISCHER.—Do you think they have arrested the Count?

HERR SCHMIDT.—I imagine that every one concerned would be taken to the police station.

FRAU FISCHER.—And then?

HERR SCHMIDT.—And then, unless the affair is cleared up, they will be kept there all night.

FRAU FISCHER (*holding up her hands in horror*).—All night! Poor Count! He will be quite crazy now, I fear—especially as this is Tuesday evening.

HERR SCHMIDT (*with decision*).—Then he must be got out at once. Herr Fischer will surely not allow——

FRAU FISCHER.—No, indeed! You have only to wait until he comes home, and then you can go together. Or, better still, if he does not come back in a quarter of an hour, and if he has really shut up his shop as usual, you might look for him at the Café Leopold, and if he is not there, it is just possible that he may have looked in at the theatre, for which he often has free tickets—and if the performance is over, he may be in the Café Maximilian, or he may have gone to drink a glass of beer——

HERR SCHMIDT (*jumping to his feet*).—But, good Heavens, Frau Fischer, you said you were quite sure he was coming home at once! Now I have lost all this time.

FRAU FISCHER (*smiling*).—You see it is just possible that to-night, as he was a little annoyed with me for being sharp with the Count, he may have gone somewhere without telling me. But I really could not foresee it, because he is such a good——

HERR SCHMIDT.—I know. If I miss him, you will tell him, will you not? Thank you, and good night, Frau Fischer, I cannot afford to wait a moment longer. (*He goes out.*)

FRAU FISCHER.—Oh, ho! Herr Fischer is at the other end of the city. (*She goes out.*)

OPEN OR SHUT?

Adapted from a *proverb in one act* by Alfred de Musset, entitled "A door must be either open or shut."

CHARACTERS.

Count, *an interesting, intelligent gentleman who lives opposite the* MARQUISE.

Marquise, *a wealthy lady, of sparkling wit, who thoroughly understands and plays with the* COUNT.

Situation.—*The* COUNT *calls to propose to the* MARQUISE, *but her repartee holds him off and brings him into various ridiculous situations.*

There should be an exit on each side, a window should be near the door at which the COUNT *enters. The fire is opposite this door, and there should be some logs near by and also a fire-screen. A cushion should be somewhere at hand. The room otherwise should be fitted up as elegantly as possible.*

The MARQUISE *is seated on a sofa near the fire embroidering, when the* COUNT *enters a door from the opposite side and bows.*

COUNT.—My memory is shocking. I can't possibly remember your day. Whenever I want to see you, it is sure to be a Tuesday.

MARQUISE.—Have you anything to say to me?

COUNT.—No; but suppose I had, I could not say it.

Within the next quarter of an hour, you are sure to have a mob of intimate friends in here. I warn you they will put me to flight.

MARQUISE.—It is true that to-day is my day. Everybody has a day. It is the only way to see as little as possible of people. When I say "I am at home on Tuesdays," it is as if I said, "Leave me in peace on the other days."——

COUNT.—That makes it all the worse for me to come to-day, since you allow me to see you in the week——

MARQUISE.—Sit down. If you are in a good temper, you may talk; if not warm yourself. (*He sits, showing considerable emotion scarcely controlled.*) But what is the matter with you? You seem——

COUNT (*controlling himself*).—What?

MARQUISE.— I would not say the word for the world.

COUNT (*relieved*).—Well, indeed, then I will admit it. Before I came in I was a little——

MARQUISE.—What? It is my turn now to ask.

COUNT (*with some agitation*).—Will you be angry if I tell you?

MARQUISE.—There's a ball this evening and I want to look my best; so I shall not lose my temper all day.

COUNT (*apparently giving up his purpose to propose*).—Well, I was a little bored. I don't know what to do. I am as stupid as a magazine article.

MARQUISE.—I can say the same for myself. I am bored to extinction. It is the weather, no doubt.

COUNT.—The fact is, cold is abominable.

MARQUISE.—Perhaps it is because we are growing old. I am begining to be thirty, and am losing my talent for existence.

COUNT.—It is a talent I never had, and what frightens me is that I am picking it up. As one ages, one turns

fogy or fool, and I am (*in a tone of despair*) desperately afraid of dying a wiseacre.

MARQUISE (*apparently shocked*).—Ring for them to put a log on the fire. Your idea freezes me. (*A ring of the door-bell is heard outside.*)

COUNT.—It is not worth while. There is a ring at the door, and your procession is arriving.

MARQUISE.—Let us see who will carry the flag; and above all, do your best to stay.

COUNT.—No; decidedly I am off.

MARQUISE.—Where are you going?

COUNT.—I haven't an idea. (*He rises, bows and opens the door.*) Adieu, madam, till Thursday evening.

MARQUISE.—Why Thursday?

COUNT.—Is it not your day at the opera? I will go and pay you a little visit.

MARQUISE.—I don't want you; you are too cross. Besides, I take M. Camus.

COUNT.—M. Camus, your country neighbor? (*He takes a step back into the room.*)

MARQUISE.—Yes. He sold me apples and hay with great politeness, and I want to return the favor.

COUNT.—The most wearisome creature! By the way, do you know what the world says?

MARQUISE.—No. But no one is coming. Who rang there?

COUNT (*looking out of window*).—No one. A little girl, I think with a bandbox—something or other—a washerwoman. She is there in the court talking to your servants.

MARQUISE.—You call that something or other. That's polite. It is my bonnet.—Well, what are they saying about me and M. Camus?—Do shut that door. There's a terrible draught.

COUNT (*shutting the door*).—People are saying that you are thinking of marrying again, and that M. Camus is a millionaire, and that he comes very often to your house.

MARQUISE.—Really! Is that all? And you tell me that to my face?

COUNT.—I tell it you because people are talking of it.

MARQUISE.—That is a pretty reason. Do I repeat to you all the world says of you?

COUNT (*astonished*).—Of me, madam? What can it be? You frighten me.

MARQUISE.—One more proof that the world is right.

COUNT (*sitting down*).—I implore you, Marquise. I ask it as a favor. You are the person in all the world whose opinion I value most.

MARQUISE (*calmly*).—One of the persons, you mean.

COUNT.—No, madam, I say the person—she whose esteem, whose opinion——

MARQUISE.—Good heavens! you are going to turn a phrase.

COUNT.—Not at all. You can't but understand.

MARQUISE (*in a bantering tone*).—I only understand what people tell me, and even then I am hard of hearing.

COUNT (*a little angry*).—You laugh at everything; but candidly (*he becomes almost passionate*), could it be possible that after seeing you for a whole year, with your wit, your beauty, your grace——

MARQUISE (*with affected horror*).—But, good heavens! this is worse than a phrase; it is a declaration. Warn me at least. Is it a declaration or a New Year's compliment?

COUNT.—And suppose it were a declaration.

MARQUISE.—Oh, I don't want it this morning. I told you I was going to a ball; I run the risk of hearing some

this evening, and my health won't stand that sort of thing twice a day. (*Bell rings again.*)

COUNT.—There's another ring. Good-by, I am off. (*He opens the door but turns back.*) Will you not repeat what was said to you about me, Marquise?

MARQUISE.—Come to the ball this evening, and we will have a talk.

COUNT.—Yes, talk in a ballroom! A nice spot for conversation! Do you know what I am going to do? I am going back to Italy.

MARQUISE.—Ah? And how will that suit mademoiselle?

COUNT.—Mademoiselle who, please?

MARQUISE.—Mademoiselle—somebody. The young lady who is your protégée. What do I know of your ballet-girl's names?

COUNT.—Ah! So that is the fine story they have been telling you about me?

MARQUISE.—Precisely. Do you deny it?

COUNT.—It is a pack of rubbish.

MARQUISE.—Do shut that door; you are freezing me.

COUNT.—I am just going.—(*Looks out of window.*) The weather has changed. It is raining and hailing as hard as you please. There is another bonnet for you.

MARQUISE.—But do shut that door. You can't go out in this weather.

COUNT (*shutting the door*).—With this hail you will not have any one here. There is one of your days wasted——

MARQUISE.—Not at all, since you came. Do put down your hat. It worries me.

COUNT (*putting the hat down*).—A compliment, madam. Take care, you who profess to hate them, might have yours taken for truth.

MARQUISE.—But I say it, and it is quite true. You give me great pleasure by coming to see me.

COUNT (*sitting down near the Marquise*).—Then let me love you.

MARQUISE.—I am quite willing. That doesn't annoy me the least bit in the world.

COUNT.—Then let me speak of it to you.

MARQUISE.—No, indeed. Because I am alone you feel yourself bound in honor to make love to me—this same eternal, intolerable love-making, that is so useless, so ridiculous and so hackneyed an affair. Good heavens! do you think I don't know what you could tell me?

COUNT.—Is it really possible? What, you, at your age, despise love? The words of a man who loves you affect you like a trashy novel. His looks, gestures, sentiments seem like a comedy to you. Where do you come from, Marquise? Who has given you these maxims?

MARQUISE.—I have come a long way, neighbor mine.

COUNT.—Yes, from your nurse. Women fancy they know everything in the world. They know nothing at all.

MARQUISE.—I beg you to put a log on the fire.

COUNT (*putting the log on*).—You discourage a poor fellow by telling him, "I know what you are going to tell me." But has he not the right to reply, "Yes, madam, but when I speak to you, I forget it." There is nothing new under the sun. But I say in my turn, "What does that prove?"

MARQUISE.—Come, this is better; you are talking capitally. This is the next thing to a book.

COUNT.—Yes, I am talking, and I am assuring you that if you are such as it is your pleasure to seem, I pity you most sincerely. Why! heaven help us! If love is a comedy——

MARQUISE.—The fire is burning badly; that log is crooked.

COUNT (*arranging the fire*).—If love is a comedy, that

world-old comedy is still, after all is said and done, the best performance that has been invented. If the play were worthless the whole universe would not know it by heart; and I am wrong to call it old. Is that old which is immortal?

MARQUISE.— Monsieur, this is poetry.

COUNT.—No, madam; but these stale speeches, these compliments, declarations are excellent old things, sometimes ridiculous, but all of them accompaniments to another thing which is always young.

MARQUISE.—You are getting confused. What is it that is always old, and what is it that is always young?

COUNT.—Love.

MARQUISE.—Monsieur, this is eloquence.

COUNT.—No, madam. I mean this; that love is eternally young, and that the ways of expressing it are, and will remain, eternally old. The worn-out formulas, the iterations, those tags of novels—all these pass, but the king never dies, Love is dead; long live Love!

MARQUISE.—Love?

COUNT.—Love. And even suppose one were merely fancying——

MARQUISE.—Give me the fire-screen there.

COUNT.—This one?

MARQUISE.—No, the brocaded one. Your fire is putting out my eyes now.

COUNT (*handing the screen to the Marquise*).—Even, suppose it were merely fancy that one is in love, is not that a charming thing?

MARQUISE.—But I tell you it is always the same thing.

COUNT.—And always new, as the song says. If you are like your grandmother, are you the less pretty for that?

MARQUISE.—That's right, there is the chorus; pretty. Give me that cushion near you.

COUNT (*taking cushion and holding it in his hand*).—That Venus is made to be beautiful, to be loved and admired, does not bore her in the least. If the splendid figure Milo conceived ever had a divine model, assuredly she let herself be loved like any one else, like her cousin Astarte, like Aspasia and——

MARQUISE.—Monsieur, this is mythology.

COUNT (*still holding cushion*).—No, madam, I cannot say how painful to me is the sight of this fashionable indifference this mocking, disdainful coldness. (*She yawns.*) People turn aside, or yawn, as you do at this moment, and say that love is a thing not to be talked of. Then why do you wear lace? What is that tuft of feathers doing in your hair?

MARQUISE.—And what is that cushion doing in your hand? I asked you for it to put under my feet.

COUNT (*he places the cushion on the floor before the Marquise and kneels on it*).—Well, then, there it is, and there am I too, and whether you will or no, I will make you a proposal, as old as the streets and as stupid as a goose, for I am furious with you.

MARQUISE (*coldly*).—Will you do me the favor to rise, if you please?

COUNT.—No; you must listen to me first.

MARQUISE.—You will not get up?

COUNT.—No, no, and no again, as you said a moment ago, unless you consent to hear me.

MARQUISE (*rising*).—Then I have the honor to wish you a good morning.

COUNT (*still on his knees*).—Marquise, in heaven's name this is too cruel. You will make me mad. You will drive me to despair.

MARQUISE.—You will recover at the Café de Paris.

COUNT (*in the same position*).—No, upon my honor, I

speak from my heart. It is not to-day only; it is from the first day I saw you that I have loved you, that I have adored you. There is no exaggeration in the words I use. Yes for more than a year I have adored you. I have dreamed——

MARQUISE.—Adieu! (*She goes out leaving the door open.*)

COUNT (*in desolation he remains kneeling a moment longer, then he rises with a shiver*).—That door is icy. (*He starts out but sees the Marquise.*) Ah, Marquise, you are laughing at me.

MARQUISE (*leaning against the half-open door*).—So you have found your feet.

COUNT.—Yes; and I am going, never to see you again.

MARQUISE.—Come to the ball this evening, I am keeping a waltz for you.

COUNT.—I will never, never see you again. I am in despair; I am lost.

MARQUISE.—What is the matter with you.

COUNT.—I am lost. I love you like a child. I swear to you on all that is most sacred in the world——

MARQUISE (*she is going out*).—Adieu!

COUNT.—It is for me to leave, madam. Stay, I beg of you. I feel how much I have to suffer——

MARQUISE (*seriously*).—Let us make an end now, monsieur. What do you want with me?

COUNT (*confused*).—Why, madam, I wish—I would like——

MARQUISE.—What? You wear out my patience. Do you imagine that I am going to be your mistress? It is revolting.

COUNT (*astonished*).—You, Marquise? Great heavens! My whole life I would lay at your feet. My name, my property, my honor itself I would entrust to you. Am I blind or mad? You my mistress? No, but my wife.

MARQUISE (*contentedly*).—Oh! very well. If you had told me that at the beginning, we should not have quarrelled. So you want to marry me?

COUNT.—Why, certainly, I am dying to. For this last year I have been thinking of nothing else. I would give my life-blood to be allowed the faintest hope.

MARQUISE.—Wait now. You are richer than I.

COUNT.—Oh dear no! I don't think so. And what does it matter to you? I entreat you, let us not talk of these things. Your smile this moment makes me shiver with hope and fear. One word, for pity's sake. My life is in your hands.

MARQUISE.—I am going to tell you two proverbs. The first is, Never play at cross purposes.

COUNT.—Then what I have dared to tell you does not displease you?

MARQUISE.—Oh no! Here is my second proverb: A door must be either open or shut. Now for three-quarters of an hour here has this door, thanks to you, been neither one nor the other, and the room is perfectly icy. Consequence again—you are going to give me your arm to take me to dine at my mother's. I am going to put on my bonnet.

COUNT.—You overwhelm me with joy. How am I to express——

MARQUISE (*as she goes out on opposite side*).—But do shut that unhappy door. This room will never be fit to live in again. (*He goes out.*)

TAMING A WIFE.

Adapted from a play, "The Honeymoon," by John Tobin.

CHARACTERS.

Duke Aranza, *a tall, good-looking, strong-minded man.*

Balthazar, *a powerful, irascible, elderly man.*

Juliana, *beautiful, haughty, and independent, wife to* DUKE, *and daughter to* BALTHAZAR.

Pedro, *usher in* DUKE'S *Palace.*

Jaques, *servant to* DUKE, *acting Duke, in absence of real duke.*

Campillo, *steward to* DUKE.

Lopez, *a peasant.*

Attendants and Ladies at the Court of the Duke.

Situation.—*The* DUKE, *immediately after his marriage, takes his bride not to his palace, but to a country cottage in order to tame her haughty, almost insolent spirit before giving her the power and position of Duchess. In anger at the deception, she writes to her father to come to her deliverance. After many delays he at last arrives only to find her now content with her humble life in a cottage. He nevertheless seeks redress at the* DUKE'S *palace. The* DUKE *takes this occasion to return to his real home, where* JAQUES *has presided in his absence; and all parties are thus satisfied.*

The DUKE *should be dressed as a peasant until the last scene, when he dons his ducal robes.* JAQUES, *when he first appears, should have on some gorgeous apparel over his costume as chief servant. He must slip these garments off before he comes in preceding the real duke.* JULIANA'S *attire should be simple,—in the last scene, a white muslin.*

Scene I.

A room in a cottage. Table and two chairs. Enter the DUKE, *leading in* JULIANA.

DUKE (*brings a chair forward and sits down*).—You are welcome home.

JULIANA (*crosses*).—Home! You are merry; this retired spot
Would be a palace for an owl!

DUKE.— 'Tis ours——

JULIANA.—Ay, for the time we stay in it.

DUKE.— By Heaven,
This is the noble mansion that I spoke of!

JULIANA.—This!—You are not in earnest, though you bear it
With such a sober brow.—Come, come, you jest.

DUKE.—Indeed I jest not; were it ours in jest,
We should have none, wife.

JULIANA.— Are you serious, sir?

DUKE.—I swear, as I'm your husband, and no duke.

JULIANA.—No duke?

DUKE.— But of my own creation, lady.

JULIANA (*aside*).—Am I betrayed?—Nay, do not play the fool!
It is too keen a joke.

DUKE.— You'll find it true.

JULIANA.—You are no duke, then?
DUKE.— None.
JULIANA (*aside*).— Have I been cozened?—
And have you no estate, sir?
No palaces, nor houses?
DUKE.— None but this:
A small snug dwelling, and in good repair.
JULIANA.—Nor money, nor effects?
DUKE.— None that I know of.
JULIANA.—And the attendants who have waited on us?
DUKE.—They were my friends, who, having done my business,
Are gone about their own.
JULIANA (*aside*).—Why, then, 'tis clear.—
That I was ever born!—(*Aloud*). What are you, sir?
DUKE (*rises*).—I am an honest man—that may content you.
Young, nor ill-favor'd—should not that content you?
I am your husband, and that must content you.
JULIANA.—I will go home! (*Going.*)
DUKE.—You are at home, already. (*Staying her.*)
JULIANA.—I'll not endure it!—But remember this—
Duke, or no duke, I'll be a duchess, sir! (*Crosses.*)
DUKE.—A duchess! You shall be a queen,—to all
Who, by the courtesy, will call you so.
JULIANA.—And I will have attendance!
DUKE.— So you shall,
When you have learnt to wait upon yourself.
JULIANA.—To wait upon myself! Must I bear this?
I could tear out my eyes, that bade you woo me,
And bite my tongue in two, for saying yes! (*Crosses.*)
DUKE.—And if you should, 'twould grow again.—
I think, to be an honest yeoman's wife

(For such, my would-be duchess, you will find me,)
You were cut out by nature.
JULIANA.— You will find, then,
That education, sir, has spoilt me for it.—
Why! do you think I'll work?
DUKE.—I think 'twill happen, wife.
JULIANA.— What! Rub and scrub
Your noble palace clean?
DUKE.— Those taper fingers
Will do it daintily.
JULIANA.— And dress your victuals
(If there be any)?—Oh! I could go mad! (*Crosses.*)
DUKE.—And mend my hose, and darn my nightcaps neatly:
Wait, like an echo, till you're spoken to—
JULIANA.—Or like a clock, talk only once an hour?
DUKE.—Or like a dial; for that quietly
Performs its work, and never speaks at all.
JULIANA.—To feed your poultry and your hogs!—Oh, monstrous!
And when I stir abroad, on great occasions
Carry a squeaking tithe pig to the vicar;
Or jolt with higglers' wives the market trot,
To sell your eggs and butter! (*Crossing.*)
DUKE.— Excellent!
How well you sum the duties of a wife!
Why, what a blessing I shall have in you!
JULIANA.—A blessing!
DUKE.— When they talk of you and me,
Darby and Joan shall no more be remembered :—
We shall be happy!
JULIANA.— Shall we?
DUKE.— Wondrous happy!
Oh, you will make an admirable wife!

JULIANA.—I'll make a devil.
DUKE.— What?
JULIANA.— A very devil.
DUKE.—Oh, no! We'll have no devils.
JULIANA.— I'll not bear it!
I'll to my father's!—
DUKE.— Gently: you forget
You are a perfect stranger to the road.
JULIANA.—My wrongs will find a way, or make me.
DUKE.— Softly!
You stir not hence, except to take the air;
And then I'll breathe it with you.
JULIANA.— What, confine me?
DUKE.—'Twould be unsafe to trust you yet abroad.
JULIANA.—Am I a truant schoolboy?
DUKE.— Nay, not so;
But you must keep your bounds.
JULIANA.— And if I break them
Perhaps you'll beat me.—
DUKE.— Beat you!
The man that lays his hand upon a woman,
Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch
Whom 'twere gross flattery to name a coward—
I'll talk to you, lady, but not beat you.
JULIANA.—Well, if I may not travel to my father
I may write to him, surely!—And I will—
If I can meet within your spacious dukedom
Three such unhoped-for miracles at once,
As pens, and ink, and paper.
DUKE.— You will find them
In the next room.—A word before you go—
You are my wife, by every tie that's sacred;
The partner of my fortune and my bed—

JULIANA.—Your fortune !

DUKE.—Peace !— No fooling, idle woman !
Beneath th' attesting eye of Heaven I've sworn
To love, to honor, cherish and protect you.
No human power can part us. What remains, then?
To fret, and worry and torment each other?
Or, like a loving and a patient pair
To soothe the taste of fortune's lowliness
With sweet consent, and mutual fond endearment?—
Now to your chamber—write what'er you please ;
But pause before you stain the spotless paper,
With words that may inflame, but cannot heal !

JULIANA.—Why, what a patient worm you take me for !

DUKE.—I took you for a wife ; and, ere I've done,
I'll know you for a good one.

JULIANA.— You shall know me
For a right woman, full of her own sex ;
Who when she suffers wrong, will speak her anger,
Who feels her own prerogative, and scorns,
By the proud reason of superior man,
To be taught patience, when her swelling heart
Cries out revenge ! (*She goes out.*)

DUKE.— Why, let the flood rage on !
There is no tide in woman's wildest passion
But hath an ebb.—I've broke the ice, however.—
Write to her father !—She may write a folio—
Though I have heard some husbands say, and wisely,
A woman's honor is her safest guard,
Yet there's some virtue in a lock and key. (*Locks the door.*)
So, thus begins our honeymoon.—'Tis well !
For the first fortnight, ruder than March winds,
She'll blow a hurricane. The next, perhaps
Like April she may wear a changeful face

Of storm and sunshine: and when that is past
She will break glorious as unclouded May. (*He goes out.*)

Scene II.

A room in the cottage,—A table and chair. Enter the DUKE, *in peasant dress. He unlocks the door on the other side and holds the key in his hand.*

DUKE.—She hath composed a letter, and what's worse
Contrived to send it by a village boy
That passed the window.—Yet she now appears
Profoundly penitent. It cannot be;
'Tis a conversion too miraculous.
Her cold disdain yields with too free a spirit;
Like ice, which melted by unnatural heat—
Not by the gradual and kindly thaw
Of the resolving elements—give it air,
Will straight congeal again—She comes—I'll try her.

Enter JULIANA *in a Peasant's Dress, through door just unlocked.*

Why, what's the matter now?
JULIANA.— That foolish letter!
DUKE.—What! You repent of having written it?
JULIANA.—I do indeed. I could cut off my fingers
For being partners in the act.
DUKE.— No matter;
You may indite one in a milder spirit,
That shall pluck out its sting.
JULIANA.— I can—
DUKE.— You must.
JULIANA.—I can.
DUKE.— You shall.
JULIANA.— I will, if 'tis your pleasure.
DUKE.—Well replied.

I see now plainly you have found your wits,
And are a sober metamorphosed woman.
JULIANA.—I am, indeed.
DUKE.— I know it; I can read you.
There is a true contrition in your looks:—
Yours is no penitence in masquerade—
You are not playing on me?
JULIANA.— Playing, sir.
DUKE.—You have found out the vanity of those things
For which you lately sigh'd so deep?
JULIANA.— I have, sir.
DUKE.—A dukedom!—Pshaw!—It is an idle thing.
JULIANA.—I have begun to think so.
DUKE (*aside*).— That's a lie!—
Is not this tranquil and retired spot
More rich in real pleasure than a palace?
JULIANA.—I like it infinitely.
DUKE (*aside*).— That's another!—
The mansion's small, 'tis true, but very snug
JULIANA.—Exceeding snug!
DUKE.—The furniture not splendid,
But then all useful!
JULIANA.— All exceeding useful!——
(*Aside.*) There's not a piece on't but serves twenty purposes.
DUKE.—And though we're seldom plagued by visitors,
We have the best of company—ourselves.
Nor, whilst our limbs are full of active youth,
Need we loll in a carriage to provoke
A lazy circulation of the blood, (*takes her arm and walks about*)
When walking is a nobler exercise.
JULIANA.—More wholesome too.
DUKE.— And far less dangerous.

JULIANA.—That's certain!

DUKE.— Then for servants, all agree,
They are the greatest plagues on earth.

JULIANA.— No doubt on't!

DUKE.—Who, then, that has a taste for happiness,
Would live in a large mansion, only fit
To be an habitation for the winds;
Keep gilded ornaments for dust and spiders;
See every body, care for nobody;
When they could live as we do?

JULIANA.— Who, indeed?

DUKE.—Here we want nothing.

JULIANA.—Nothing!— Yes, one thing.

DUKE.—Indeed! What's that?

JULIANA.— You will be angry!

DUKE.— Nay—
Not if it be a reasonable thing.

JULIANA.—What wants the bird, who, from his wiry prison
Sings to the passing traveller of air
A wistful note—that she were with them, sir?

DUKE (*aside*).—Umph! What, your liberty? I see it now.——
We have been wedded yet a few short days—
Let us wear out a month as man and wife;
If at the end on't, with uplifted hands,
Morning and ev'ning, and sometimes at noon,
And bended knees, you do not plead more warmly,
Than e'er you prayed 'gainst stale virginity,
To keep me for your husband——

JULIANA.— If I do!——

DUKE.—Then let your will be done, that seeks to part us!

JULIANA.—I do implore that you will let it stand
Upon that footing!—A month's soon past, and then—

I am your humble servant, sir.
DUKE.— Forever.
JULIANA.—Nay, I'll be hanged first.
DUKE.— That may do as well.
Come, you'll think better on't!
JULIANA.— By all——
DUKE.—No swearing.
JULIANA.— No, no,—no swearing.
DUKE.—You have your liberty. (*She goes out.*)—
(*alone*) But I shall watch you closely, lady,
And see that you abuse it not. (*He goes out.*)

Scene III.

The same room. Enter the DUKE *bringing in* JULIANA.

DUKE.—No resistance!—For a month, at least, I am your husband.
JULIANA.—True!—And what's a husband?
DUKE (*puts her over to one side*).—Why, as some wives would metamorphose him,
A very miserable ass, indeed!
JULIANA.—True, there are many such.
DUKE.— And there are men,
Whom not a swelling lip, or wrinkled brow,
Or the loud rattle of a woman's tongue——
Or what's more hard to parry, the warm close
Of lips, that from the inmost heart of man
Plucks out his stern resolves—can move one jot
From the determined purpose of his soul,
Or stir an inch from his prerogative.——
Ere it be long, you'll dream of such a man.
JULIANA.—Where, waking, shall I see him?
DUKE.— Look on me!
Come, to your chamber!

JULIANA.— I won't be confined!
DUKE.—Won't!—Say you so?
JULIANA (*she relents*).—Well, then, I do request.
You won't confine me.
DUKE.— You'll leave me?
JULIANA.— No, indeed!
As there is truth in language, on my soul
I will not leave you!
DUKE.— You've deceived me once——
JULIANA.—And therefore, do not merit to be trusted
I do confess it:—but, by all that's sacred,
Give me my liberty, and I will be
A patient, drudging, most obedient wife!
DUKE.—Yes: but a grumbling one?
JULIANA.— No; on my honor,
I will do all you ask, e'er you have said it.
DUKE.—And with no secret murmur of your spirit?
JULIANA.—With none, believe me!
DUKE.— Have a care!
For if I catch you on the wing again,
I'll clip you closer than a garden hawk, (*he holds up a key*)
And put you in a cage, where day-light comes not;
Where you may fret your pride against the bars,
Until your heart break. (*Knocking at the door.*) See who's at the door!—(*She goes and opens it.*)

Enter LOPEZ.

My neighbor Lopez!—Welcome, sir; (*introducing her*) my wife—
(*To Juliana.*) A chair! (*She brings a chair to Lopez and throws it down.*) Your pardon—you'll excuse her, sir—
A little awkward, but exceeding willing.

One for your husband !—(*She brings another chair, and is going to throw it down as before; but as the Duke looks steadfastly at her, she desists, and places it gently by him.*)

Pray be seated, neighbor !

(*To her*) Now you may serve yourself.

JULIANA.— I thank you, sir,
I'd rather stand.

DUKE.— I'd rather you should sit.

JULIANA.—If you will have it so—(*aside*)—'Would I were dead ! (*She brings a chair, and sits down.*)

DUKE.—Though now I think again, 'tis fit you stand,
That you may be more free to serve our guest.

JULIANA.—Even as you command. (*Rises.*)

DUKE.— You will eat something? (*To Lopez.*)

LOPEZ.—Not a morsel, thank ye.

DUKE.—Then you will drink?—A glass of wine, at least?

LOPEZ.—Well, I am warm with walking, and care not if I do taste your liquor.

DUKE.—You have some wine, wife?

JULIANA.—I must e'en submit ! (*She goes out.*)

DUKE.—This visit, sir, is kind and neighborly.

LOPEZ.—I came to ask a favor of you. We have to-day a sort of merry-making on the green hard by—'twere too much to call it a dance—and as you are a stranger here—

DUKE.—Your patience for a moment.

Re-enter JULIANA *with a small pitcher of liquor.*

DUKE (*taking it*).—What have we here?

JULIANA.— 'Tis wine—you called for wine !

DUKE.—And did I bid you bring it in a nut-shell?

LOPEZ.—Nay, there is plenty !

DUKE.— I can't suffer it.
You must excuse me. (*To Lopez.*) When friends drink with us,
'Tis usual, love, to bring it in a jug.
Or else they may suspect we grudge our liquor.

JULIANA.—I shall remember. (*She goes out.*)

LOPEZ.—I am ashamed to give so much trouble.

DUKE.—No trouble; she must learn her duty, sir;
I'm only sorry you should be kept waiting.
But you were speaking——

LOPEZ.—As I was saying, it being the conclusion of our vintage, we have assembled the lads and lasses of the village——

Re-enter JULIANA.

DUKE.—Now we shall do!
Why, what the devil's this?

JULIANA.—Wine, sir.

DUKE.—This wine?—'Tis foul as ditch-water!—
Did you shake the cask?

JULIANA (*aside*).—What shall I say? Yes, sir.

DUKE.—You did?

JULIANA.—I did.

DUKE.—I thought so!
Why, do you think, my love, that wine is physic,
That must be shook before 'tis swallowed?——
Come, try again!

JULIANA.—I'll go no more! (*Puts down the wine on the ground.*)

DUKE.—You won't?

JULIANA.—I won't!

DUKE.—You won't? (*He shows key.*)
You had forgot yourself, my love.

JULIANA.—Well, I obey! (*Takes up the wine, and goes out.*)

DUKE.—Was ever man so plagued!
I am ashamed to try your patience, sir;
But women, like our watches, must be set
With care to make them go well.

Enter JULIANA,

Ay, this looks well! (*He pours some out.*

JULIANA.—The heavens be praised!

DUKE.—Come, sir, your judgment?

LOPEZ.—'Tis excellent!—But, as I was saying, to-day we have some country pastimes on the green.—Will it please you both to join our simple recreations?

DUKE.—We will attend you. Come, renew your draught, sir!

LOPEZ.—We shall expect you presently; till then, good even, sir!

DUKE.—Good even, neighbor. (*Lopez goes out.*) Go and make you ready.

JULIANA.—I take no pleasure in these rural sports.

DUKE.—Then you shall go to please your husband. Hold!
I'll have no glittering gewgaws stuck about you,
To stretch the gaping eyes of idiot wonder,
And make men stare upon a piece of earth
As on the star-wrought firmament—She's adorned
Amply, that in her husband's eye looks lovely——
The truest mirror that an honest wife
Can see her beauty in!

JULIANA.— I shall observe, sir.

DUKE.—I should like to see you in the dress
I last presented you.

JULIANA.— The blue one, sir?

DUKE.—No, love, the white.—Go modestly attired,
An half-blown rose stuck in thy braided hair,
With no more diamonds than those eyes are made of;
No deeper rubies than compose thy lips,
Nor pearls more precious than inhabit them,
With the pure red and white, which that same hand
Which blends the rainbow, mingles in thy cheeks:
Thou'lt fix as much observance, as chaste dames
Can meet without a blush.
I'll trust her with these bumpkins. None save myself
Shall buz his praises in her ear. (*He goes out.*)

Scene IV.

The cottage. Two chairs. JULIANA *sits at her needle. The* DUKE *steals in behind.*

DUKE.—Come, no more work to-night: (*sits by her*) it is the last
That we shall spend beneath this humble roof.
Our fleeting month of trial being past,
To-morrow you are free.
JULIANA.— Nay, now you mock me,
And turn my thoughts upon my former follies.
You know that, to be mistress of the world,
I would not leave you.
DUKE.— No?
JULIANA.— No, on my honor.
DUKE.—I think you like me better than you did:
And yet 't is natural. Come, come, be honest;
You have a sort of hankering—no wild wish,
No vehement desire—yet a slight longing,
A simple preference, if you had your choice,
To be a duchess, rather than a wife
Of a low peasant?

JULIANA.—No, indeed : sometimes in my dreams, I own,—
You know we cannot help our dreams !—
DUKE.— What then !
JULIANA.—Why, I confess, that sometimes, in my dreams,
A noble house and splendid equipage,
Diamonds and pearls, and gilded furniture,
Will glitter, like an empty pageant, by me ;
And then I am apt to rise a little feverish.
But never do my sober waking thoughts,—
As I'm a woman worthy of belief—
Wander to such forbidden vanities.
Yet, after all it was a scurvy trick—
Your palace and your pictures, and your plate ;
Your fine plantations, your delightful gardens,
That were a second Paradise—for fools ;
And then your grotto, so divinely cool ;
Your Gothic summer-house, and Roman temple
'Twould puzzle much an antiquarian
To find out their remains.
DUKE.— No more of that !
JULIANA.—You had a dozen spacious vineyards, too ;
Alas ! The grapes are sour ;—and, above all,
The Barbary courser that was breaking for me.
DUKE.—Nay, you shall ride him yet.
JULIANA.— Indeed !
DUKE.— Believe me,
We must forget these things.
JULIANA.—They are forgot ; (*she rises and kisses him*)
And, by this kiss, we'll think of them no more,
But when we want a theme to make us merry.
DUKE.—It was an honest one, and spoke thy soul !
And by the fresh lip and unsullied breath,
Which joined to give it sweetness—

Enter BALTHAZAR *in excitement.*

JULIANA (*crosses*).— How! My father!

DUKE.—Signior Balthazar! You are welcome, sir,
To our poor habitation.

BALTHAZAR.— Welcome! Villain,
I come to call your dukeship to account,
And to reclaim my daughter. (*She stands between them.*)

DUKE (*aside*).— You will find her
Reclaimed already, or I have lost my pains.

BALTHAZAR.—Let me come at him!

JULIANA.— Patience, my dear father!

DUKE.—Nay, give him room. Put up your weapon, sir—
'T is the worst argument a man can use;
So let it be the last. As for your daughter,
She passes by another title here,
In which your whole authority is sunk—
My lawful wife.

BALTHAZAR.—Lawful!—his lawful wife!
I shall go mad. Did not you basely steal her
Under a vile pretense?

DUKE.— What I have done
I'll answer to the law.
Of what do you complain?

BALTHAZAR.— Why, are you not
A most notorious, self-confessed impostor?

DUKE.—True; I am somewhat dwindled from the state
In which you lately knew me: nor alone
Should my exceeding change provoke your wonder;
You'll find your daughter is not what she was.

BALTHAZAR.—How, Juliana?

JULIANA.— 'T is, indeed, most true:
I left you, sir, a froward, foolish girl,
But I have learned this truth indelibly—

That modesty in deed, in word, and thought,
Is the prime grace of woman; and with that,
More than with frowning looks and saucy speeches,
She may persuade the man that rightly loves her.

BALTHAZAR.—Amazement! Why, this metamorphosis
Exceeds his own! What spells, what cunning witch-craft
Has he employed?

JULIANA.—None: he has simply taught me
To look into myself; impressed my heart,
And made me see at length the thing I have been,
And what I am, sir.

BALTHAZAR.—Are you then content
To live with him?

JULIANA.—Content? I am most happy!

BALTHAZAR.—Can you forget your crying wrongs?

JULIANA.— Not quite, sir;
They sometimes serve to make us merry with.

BALTHAZAR.—How like a villain he abused your father?

JULIANA.—You will forgive him that, for my sake.

BALTHAZAR.— Never!

DUKE.—Why, then 'tis plain you seek your own revenge,
And not your daughter's happiness.

BALTHAZAR.— No matter.
I charge you, on your duty as my daughter,
Follow me!

DUKE.—On a wife's obedience,
I charge you, stir not!

JULIANA.—You, sir, are my father;
At the bare mention of that hallowed name,
A thousand recollections rise within me,
To witness you have ever been a kind one:
This is my husband, sir!

BALTHAZAR.— Thy husband; well——

JULIANA.—'Tis fruitless now to think upon the means
He used—I am irrevocably his:
And, by adoption, I am bound as strictly
To do his reasonable bidding now,
As once to follow yours.

DUKE (*aside*).—Most excellent!

BALTHAZAR.—Yet I will be revenged!

DUKE (*to Balthazar*).— You would have justice?

BALTHAZAR.—I will.

DUKE.— Then forthwith meet me at the duke's

BALTHAZAR.—What pledge have I for your appearance there?

DUKE.—Your daughter, sir.—(*she protests*)—Nay, go, my Juliana!
'Tis my request:—within an hour at farthest,
I shall expect to see you at the palace.

BALTHAZAR.—Come, Juliana.—You shall find me there, sir.

DUKE.—Look not thus sad at parting, Juliana;
All will run smooth yet.

BALTHAZAR.— Come!

JULIANA.— Heaven grant it may!

DUKE.—The duke shall right us all, without delay. (*Balthazar and Juliana go out on one side; the Duke on the other.*)

Scene V.

The Judgment hall of the DUKE'S *Palace. A State Chair is placed on a raised platform. Enter* CAMPILLO, *the* DUKE'S *Steward and* PEDRO.

PEDRO.—But can no one tell the meaning of the fancy?

CAMPILLO.—No: 'twas the Duke's pleasure, and that's enough for us. I found again to-day the writing which he sent. These were his words:

"*For reasons, that I shall here communicate, it is necessary that Jaquez should, in all things, at present, act as my representative; you will, therefore, command my household to obey him as myself, until you hear further from*

(Signed) ARANZA."

PEDRO.—Well, we must wait the upshot. But what think you of the way that Jaquez bears his new dignity?

CAMPILLO.—Like most men in whom sudden fortune combats against long established habit. (*Laughing without.*)

PEDRO.—That must be he.

CAMPILLO.—Stand aside and let us note him. (*Pedro goes out with Campillo.*)

Enter JAQUEZ, *dressed as the* DUKE, *followed by six attendants, who struggle in vain to restrain their laughter.*

JAQUEZ.—You ragamuffins, show your grinders again and I'll hang you like onions, fifty on a rope.—Here, I'll not have you round me.—Leave me, get out. I'll be alone.—(*They go off*)—I begin to find, by the strength of my nerves and the steadiness of my countenance that I was certainly intended for a great man. It will be rather awkward to resign; but still the month is now quite gone and like other great men in office I will retire with a good grace, to avoid being turned out—as a well-bred dog always walks down stairs, when he sees preparations on foot for kicking him into the street.

Enter CAMPILLO *hastily.*

CAMPILLO.—Jaquez, the Duke is here and calls for you.

JAQUEZ.—What, so quick? (*He scrambles out, followed by Campillo.*)

Enter BALTHAZAR *and* JULIANA, *preceded by* PEDRO.

BALTHAZAR.—You'll tell his highness, I am waiting for him.

PEDRO.—What name?

BALTHAZAR.—No matter; tell him an old man,
Who has been basely plundered of his child,
And has performed a weary pilgrimage
In search of justice, hopes to find it here.

PEDRO.—I will deliver this. (*Exit Pedro.*)

BALTHAZAR.— And he shall right me;
Or I will make his dukedom ring so loud
With my great wrongs, that—

JULIANA.— Pray, be patient, sir.

BALTHAZAR.—Where is your husband?

JULIANA.— He will come, no doubt.

Enter PEDRO.

BALTHAZAR.—What news, sir?

PEDRO.—The Duke will see you presently.

BALTHAZAR.—'Tis well!
Has there been a man here to seek him lately?

PEDRO.—None, sir.

BALTHAZAR.—A tall, well-looking man enough,
Though a rank knave, dressed in a peasant's garb?

PEDRO.—There has been no such person.

BALTHAZAR.— No, nor will be!
It was a trick to steal off quietly,
And get the start of justice. He has reach'd,
Ere this, the nearest sea-port, or inhabits
One of his air-built castles. (*Trumpets and Kettle-Drums.*)

PEDRO.— Stand aside!

Enter the DUKE, *superbly dressed, preceded by* JAQUEZ, *and followed by attendants, and six Ladies.*

DUKE.—Now, sir, your business with me?

BALTHAZAR.—How?

JULIANA.—Amazement!

DUKE.—I hear you would have audience.

JAQUEZ (*aside*).—Exactly my manner!

BALTHAZAR.—Of the duke, sir!

DUKE.—I am the duke.

BALTHAZAR.—The jest is somewhat stale, sir.

DUKE.—You'll find it true.

BALTHAZAR.—Indeed!

JAQUEZ (*aside*).—Nobody doubted my authority.

JULIANA (*aside*).—Be still, my heart!

BALTHAZAR.—I think you would not trifle with me now.—

DUKE.—I am the duke Aranza.

And, what's my greater pride, this lady's husband; (*crosses to Juliana, takes her hand, and leads her forward*)
Whom, having honestly redeem'd my pledge,
I thus take back again. You now must see
The drift of what I have been lately acting,
And what I am. And though, being a woman
Giddy with youth and unrestrained fancy,
The domineering spirit of her sex
I have rebuked too sharply; yet 'twas done,
As skilful surgeons cut beyond the wound,
To make the cure complete.

BALTHAZAR.— You have done most wisely,
And all my anger dies in speechless wonder.

JAQUEZ (*aside*).—So does all my greatness!

DUKE.—What says my Juliana?

JULIANA.— I am lost, too,
In admiration, sir; my fearful thoughts
Rise, on a trembling wing, to that rash height
Whence, growing dizzy once, I fell to earth.
Yet since your goodness, for the second time,

Will lift me, though unworthy, to that pitch
Of greatness, there to hold a constant flight,
I will endeavor so to bear myself
That in the world's eye, and my friends' observance—
And, what's far dearer, your most precious judgment—
I may not shame your dukedom.

DUKE.— Bravely spoken.
Why, now you shall have rank and equipage—
Servants, for you can now command yourself—
Glorious apparel, not to swell your pride,
But to give lustre to your modesty.
All pleasures, all delights, that noble dames
Warm their chaste fancies with, in full abundance
Shall flow upon you; and, you too, shall ride
That Barbary courser.—For a gentle wife
Is still the sterling comfort of man's life;
To fools a torment, but a lasting boon
To those who wisely keep their Honey-Moon.

CURTAIN.

THE PRAIRIE PRINCESSES.

CHARACTERS.

Lou Dayton, *a Chicago belle.*

Madge Dayton, *her younger irrepressible sister.*

Dick Majendie, *their cousin, who lives in London.*

Duchess of Diddlesex, *a large, dignified lady, of great politeness and conventionality.*

Lady Fanny, *her daughter, a silent young person.*

Lord Algernon Penryhn, *her son, a still more silent young person.*

A Footman.

Situation.—LADY FANNY *writes an invitation to* MISS LOU DAYTON *and her sister* MADGE *to dine at Diddlesex Castle. At the same time she writes to her sister-in-law,* SOPHIE, *to come to the dinner and rescue her from Choctaw Princesses. By mistake the* DAYTONS *receive the letter intended for* SOPHIE.

So LOU *and* MADGE *plot to appear in Mexican costume and to act like real prairie savages. They dress in brilliant colors—short skirts, bright sashes, black lace stockings, short scarlet jackets, showing white silk shirts. They carry a dagger and a pistol at the waist, and a large fan in the hand; and* MADGE *has a short riding whip. On their heads are light pieces of lace or gauze as mantillas. They always act with boldness and assurance.*

Their cousin, DICK MAJENDIE, *at first objects to the scheme; but finally relents and surprises his cousins by appearing in his Mexican costume. He wears a wide sombrero, a buckskin suit, negligée shirt, red sash at waist, and carries a pistol and knife in his belt.*

LORD ALGERNON *carries a monocle, which he stares through in the most idiotic fashion.*

The dialogue takes place in London in the richly furnished drawing-room of Diddlesex Castle.

Enter the DUCHESS, *followed by* LORD ALGERNON *and* LADY FANNY, *all in full-dress.*

LADY FANNY (*wearily*).—I wish Sophie would come before those Americans arrive.

DUCHESS.—Have you sent word to her?

LADY FANNY.—Yes! I wrote to come to rescue me out of the hands of two Choctaw Princesses from the West.

DUCHESS.—My dear, you must treat them with courtesy for the sake of your brother Howard. They entertained him in America, you know, for three months, and since he has gone to Norway every letter refers to their visit here.

LADY FANNY.—Mamma, where do they come from? Is it Detroit, or Kalamazoo, or Chicago?

DUCHESS (*complacently*).—I do not remember precisely which is their native village.

LADY FANNY.—These *veneered savages* in Worth gowns are so uninteresting——

Enter FOOTMAN.

FOOTMAN (*advances, bows*).—Mr. Majendie.

Enter DICK MAJENDIE, *with a swagger. He passes footman, bows low to the group, who look at him in surprise.*

DUCHESS (*eying him through her glass*).—Mr.—er—Mr. Majendie!

LADY FANNY.—Or one of Tussaud's wax works.

LORD ALGERNON (*staring hard through his monocle*).—By Jove!

DICK (*bowing again*).—Dick Majendie, as much at your service as ever, Duchess. I have merely returned to my native costume. I saw my American cousins this morning——

LADY FANNY (*turning away*).—Ah, that explains.

DICK (*turning quickly*).—I beg your pardon. You said——

LADY FANNY.—Nothing, Mr. Majendie. You are quite mistaken.

DICK (*he bows and turns to Duchess*).—Consider me, Duchess, as a victim to——

Enter FOOTMAN, *with cards, which he hands to the* DUCHESS *with a bow.*

DUCHESS (*she looks at them in horror, and hands them to Dick*).—How very extraordinary! Perhaps you can explain these—er—singular names, Mr. Majendie?

DICK (*reads aloud*).—"Lightning Lou, *née* Dayton; Mashing Madge, *née* Dayton."

LORD ALGERNON.—By Jove!

LADY FANNY.—Doubtless another American peculiarity.

DICK (*aside*).—Spiteful little creature! (*Aloud*). Precisely, as you say, another American custom. Perhaps we should not presume to have ways of our own; but if you find us very barbarous, remember that we cannot all be born in England, you know.

LADY FANNY (*to her brother*).—He never was so disagreeable before. It is all the doing of those intolerable American cousins. I know it.

LORD ALGERNON.—By Jove !

FOOTMAN (*announces loudly*). — "Lightning Lou, *née* Dayton ; Mashing Madge, *nee* Dayton."

DICK (*coming down one side*).—Ye Gods !

Enter LOU *and* MADGE.

LOU (*advancing, assured and condescending*). — The Duchess of Diddlesex, I presume. So glad to meet you, and your sister. (*Glances at Lady Fanny.*) No, daughter, is it not? Though we hardly thought we could spare time to come to you. There is so much else that is *really* interresting. (*Fans herself and stares hard.*)

LORD ALGERNON.—By Jove !

LADY FANNY.—What savages !

DICK (*laughing aside*).—One for the Duchess.

MADGE (*turns abruptly*).—Walk light, there, Lou. Of course the Duchess knows how it is herself. But (*to Duchess*), as I told Lou, we had heard so much of you from Howard.

DUCHESS.—Howard?

MADGE.—Yes, Howard ! He is your son, isn't he? Howard Diddlesex. And he talked so much about you and the old gentleman——

DUCHESS.—The old gentleman !

DICK (*coming forward*).—My cousin means the duke, I fancy. (*Lou and Madge look at Dick and start.*)

LOU (*aside to him*).—You are a dear good fellow !

MADGE.—Your cousin, Dick Majendie, means, as she generally does, just about what she says. And as I was saying, Duchess, I told Lou we'd just chip right in, in a sociable way. So you needn't trot out your company ways for us. (*Lou and Dick laugh aside.*)

DUCHESS.—Company ways ! Chip right in ! I do not quite follow.

LOU.—Oh, Duchess, you must pardon my little sister's school-girl slang; she is only fourteen, you know.

LORD ALGERNON (*staring hard through his monocle*).—By Jove!

LADY FANNY.—Only fourteen; nonsense!

MADGE (*giving a skip*).—Good-sized girl, ain't I! (*Lady Fanny turns disdainfully away. Dick draws Madge's arm protectingly through his.*)

LOU (*fanning herself and eying Lord Algernon with marked courtesy*).—Only fourteen, I assure you, Duchess, and, as you see, irrepressible. Indeed, that is why we came abroad, she had so *many* love affairs.

DUCHESS (*horror-struck*).—So many love affairs! A girl of fourteen! Are such things possible in your country?

LADY FANNY (*aside*).—The *East* Indian savages marry at *nine* years of age.

MADGE.—You bet they are, Duchess. (*Skips over to her side.*) Why, ma and pa were regularly rattled. They calculated I was to marry Jack Peyton. So I was, only (*she pokes the Duchess with her fan*) ma said I might come over here, and pa promised me a diamond necklace that should lay all over Flossie Skegg's.—I mean her last one, that she does her marketing in.

DUCHESS.—I do not comprehend. What is doing her marketing?

LOU.—Why, ordering in the meat for dinner, and the garden sass, green things, milk, and eggs, you know. (*Aside to Dick.*) How was that, Dick? Madge outshines me in this line.

LADY FANNY.—And you order groceries and—truck—in diamonds?

MADGE (*impatiently*).—We order groceries in paper bags; but we certainly wear our diamonds when we do it, if that

is what you mean. No *lady* in Chicago would go shopping in *less* than $1,500 worth of diamonds.

LORD ALGERNON.—Oh, by Jove!

LOU (*turning sharply on him*).—An excellent country for penniless younger sons to marry in.

LADY FANNY (*aside*).—Insolent creature!

LORD ALGERNON (*struggles with a speech, opens his mouth, shuts it, says again*).—By Jove!

DUCHESS (*courteously to Madge*).—I noticed you were looking at that little copy of Michael Angelo's——

MADGE.—Michael Angelo. Oh, yes, I know. He painted that portrait of E. P. Strong; you know, Lou, Strong, the pork-packer.

DUCHESS.—Oh! ah! doubtless another person (*Lou interrupts her by singing a refrain from some popular song. Duchess stops in marked manner; draws herself up.*)

LOU (*speaking over her shoulder*).—Excuse me, Duchess; but, you see, we are untrammelled children of the West. *Prairie Princesses*, as it were. (*She glances at Lady Fanny, who starts.*) I am afraid we shock you.

DUCHESS (*courteously*).—Oh, not at all. But may I show you some of my paintings! Here is a prairie scene that may interest you.

LOU (*skips up, hooks her arm within the Duchess's*).—Prairie! I should smile! Just say prairie, and I am all there. You understand, a prairie gets me. (*The Duchess conducts her very politely out. Dick and Lord Algernon converse at one side. Madge in the centre stands contemplating Lady Fanny who is seated on the other side.*)

MADGE.—Are you ill?

LADY FANNY.—Certainly not.

MADGE.—Have you any broken bones?

LADY FANNY (*haughtily*).—I do not understand you.

MADGE (*swaggering about*).—I daresay. You English are a sort of kitchen nation. You know all about eating, running country-houses, keeping weekly accounts, making rich marriages, and stamping on poor people.

DICK (*crossing*).—For Heaven's sake, Madge——

MADGE.—All right, Dick; it's not her fault, I know, if she was born an English girl. But do you always sit like this (*imitates Lady Fanny's rigid pose*) and look like this? (*Jumps up.*) Isn't there any girl in you?

DICK (*aside*).—It's coming. There will be a pitched battle, and I, as the neutral party, shall be the victim, and taken away in sections.

LADY FANNY.—Perhaps not, as you understand it.

MADGE.—But do you never snap your fingers, and jump, and run (*suits action to word*), and speak out and up, and go in for fun generally? (*She dances about.*)

LADY FANNY (*stiffly*).—I hope not.

MADGE.—She *hopes* not. (*Laughs heartily.*) She hopes she's a petrified fish. It's too much for me. You talk to her, Dick, until Lou comes back; she makes me tired. (*Aside.*) I really did not know I could be so rude and slangy. (*She goes toward Lord Algernon, while Dick crosses to Lady Fanny. The Duchess and Lou enter.*)

LOU (*talking eagerly*).—Buffaloes! buffaloes! Why, they are as thick in Chicago as—let me see—as flies; aren't they, Dick?

DICK.—What? Buffaloes in——Oh! ah? Yes, certainly. Quite so. (*Madge becomes convulsed with laughter behind her fan.*)

DUCHESS.—I wonder you live where there are such dangers.

LOU.—Dangers? Not at all. It's delightful. Chicago's no (*with an effort*)—no slouch of a city.

MADGE (*aside to Dick*).—Poor Lou! She finds it hard—the elegant Miss Dayton, noted for her perfect manners. I must go to the rescue. (*To Duchess.*) Delightful! I should think so! There is no fun in the world up to a buffalo hunt. We were on one just before we came here, Lou and I.

LORD ALGERNON.—By Jove!

DICK.—You confound me!

MADGE (*walking up and down, and slashing a little riding-whip she has taken from her belt*).—Yes; just before we sailed. We were at breakfast, seven o'clock I reckon—we have late breakfast at our house—when Will—er—(*She hesitates.*)

DICK (*aside to her*).—Pajama will do. (*Laughs.*)

MADGE.—Will Pajama jumped in through the window, shouting, "Girls! girls! get your guns! A Buffalo hunt! Three hundred head of them at least, right outside the Palmer House!" "Oh, you hire a hall!" says Lou. (*Lou and Dick laugh together.*) And he says, "Honest Injun! See for yourself. The whole Stock Exchange is after them, half a dozen prayer-meetings, and every clerk in every shop that can beg, borrow, or steal a horse. Good time to say howdy to the folks."

LADY FANNY.—Say what?

MADGE (*whirling on her*).—Howdy, dear. We haven't time to drawl out, "How do you do?" (*To Duchess.*) As I was saying, Will said, "Get your lariats." As if we were ever without them. (*Rushing to Dick.*) Tell me quick, where do those dreadful cowboys carry their lariats?

DICK.—Around their necks, dear.

MADGE.—We always wear our lariats around our necks at home. (*Dick in quiet convulsions of laughter.*) And it was one jump from the breakfast-table—whiz! bang!—out

of the house. Ma screaming, "Girls, come back! You'll get killed!" Lou tore the door open: I behind her on the run. There was Lightning, Lou's horse, and Pitchfire, my pony. We always keep them ready saddled, you know, in case we should feel like taking the town——

DUCHESS.—What *is* that?

LOU.—Taking the town? Oh, when we feel bored, we ride up and down, half a dozen or so of us, giving the Comanche yell, and firing pistols now and then. (*She waves her pistol in the air.*) You've no idea how it wakes one up.

DUCHESS (*she starts back in horror*).—I should fancy it might.

MADGE.—Oh, but that isn't a patch on a buffalo hunt. Imagine it! Our horses are as fit as we, just mad to be off, whinneying and pawing. One jump to our saddles, and we're off. Lou's hair falls down. On we go, up one street down another. Shrieks, cries, whoops, yells! Everyone galloping like the wind, past Annie Dickson's, around church corner; men cheering and shouting, and just ahead a great dark, heaving, bellowing mass—the buffaloes. Then Lightning and Pitchfire hump themselves, we whipping and screaming, just as mad as everyone else. (*Here Lou begins to gesticulate, and Dick gives a shout, as though carried away by excitement; both follow Madge's description with appropriate gestures.*) Out goes the lariat——

DICK.—Hi! hi! Steady!

MADGE.—Straight as a shot, pliable as a rope; turning, twisting, drawing, pulling, and he is down on his knees helpless, the biggest buffalo of the herd. That was my cast, and that is what *I* call living.

DICK (*aside*).—Bravo, Madge! You're a positive genius.

LADY FANNY (*aside*).—For a Comanche—yes.

LOU.—Don't be startled, Duchess, my little sister is so impulsive; but then we are all so excitable on the subject of—er—buffaloes; they take the place of foxes with us, with the added zest of danger. Of course, very few girls make such a ten-strike as Madge; and you bet pa is proud of it. He had the buffalo's horns cased in gold, tipped with sapphires, engraved with Madge's name, the date, etc., and hung up in the hall.

DUCHESS.—And you mean to say these monsters are often seen in the very streets of Chicago? Where do they come from?

DICK.—They come from St. Louis generally, a sort of suburb of Chicago. (*Laughs to Lou.*) That is the reason the girls go heeled.

DUCHESS.—Heeled! What is that?

MADGE (*tapping her weapons*).—Armed, he means. Any time you are out shopping, you may see a hundred head of buffaloes tearing down the avenue, trampling everything flat before them. No stops for refreshments; so it is well to be ready.

DUCHESS.—Horrible! And to think that Howard remained there three months!

LOU.—That is the reason all the nurses in Chicago are men; no female could get a child out of the way in time. It is all a smart man can do to get the children safely to and from the City Playground, where they are obliged to play by law.

DUCHESS.—Play by law?

MADGE.—Why, of course; even our aldermen could not allow the little innocents to play about streets, door-steps, or gardens liable to be stamped by buffaloes at any moment. (*Dick goes off in a wild fit of laughter.*)

DUCHESS (*severely*).—I see no reason for mirth. (*She shudders.*) It must be a dreadful country.

LADY FANNY.—It is strange Howard said nothing of this.

LOU (*innocently*).—Didn't he? That is odd indeed.

MADGE.—Oh, come off, Lou! I'm dead tired of all this talking, and besides——

LOU.—Yes, of course; we are expected to show up at Lady Monteith's.

DUCHESS.—Lady Monteith's, young ladies, when you dine with me, and dinner is about to be announced?

MADGE (*dropping her burlesque manner*).—I am sure you will pardon us, Duchess, but we are savages, you know, and only eat bread and salt with our well-wishers, not to mention that we shall hardly have time to get into proper dinner-gowns and drive to Lady Monteith's.

DUCHESS.—I do not comprehend you, Miss Dayton.

MADGE.—It is very simple, Duchess. You, or perhaps I should say your daughter, Lady Fanny, preferred something in the Zulu or Choctaw style—prairie princesses, pure and simple, the genuine American *à la* Buffalo Bill—and we have been doing our best to enact the part.

LOU.—While Lady Monteith only expects the *veneered savage* in the Worth gown.

LORD ALGERNON.—By Jove!

DUCHESS (*looking at Lady Fanny*).—What is all this? I am bewildered!

LOU (*holding out Lady Fanny's note*).—If any further explanation is needed, this note may supply it. (*To Duchess.*) It was written apparently by Lady Fanny, and by an unfortunate accident enclosed, instead of an invitation to dinner, in an envelope directed to me.

LADY FANNY (*snatches note*).—Good gracious! My note to Sophie!

DUCHESS.—What will Howard say? (*Both girls smile, and courtesy low to Duchess.*)

DICK (*coming forward*).—Permit me also to say farewell, Duchess.

LADY FANNY.—But, Mr. Majendie, you dine with us.

DICK (*he takes off his sombrero and bows*).—Pardon, my cousins. (*Dick, Madge, and Lou retire backward to door.*)

LORD ALGERNON.—By Jove! (*He stares wildly about through his monocle. The Duchess extends her hand for the letter. The Americans at the door bow.*)

CURTAIN.

THE SUFFERING OF NEHUSHTA.

I. The Two Queens.
II. Nehushta and Zoroaster.
III. Priests and Pillagers.

THE TWO QUEENS.

Adapted from "Zoroaster," by F. Marion Crawford.

CHARACTERS.

Atossa, *Queen of Persia—short, fair.*

Nehushta, *a Hebrew Maiden, second wife of Darius, King of Persia—tall and dark.*

Women and Slave Girls in attendance on the Queen.

Situation.—Nehushta, *the most beautiful woman in the world, has come to the court of Persia in company with her lover,* Zoroaster, *a captain of the guard.* Queen Atossa, *also beautiful but treacherous, conceives a violent passion for* Zoroaster *and therefore a deadly hatred for* Nehushta. *During the absence of* Zoroaster *from the court for a fortnight,* Atossa *leads* Nehushta *to believe that* Zoroaster *really loves herself and so* Nehushta *accepts the king's hand in marriage. The ceremony occurs the very day of* Zoroaster's *return. He is greatly shocked and immediately disappears.*

Three years later he returns as a priest—so changed as to startle NEHUSHTA, *who hurries to* ATOSSA *for explanations.*

Queen ATOSSA *with her women and slave girls is just putting the finishing touches to her attire for the evening banquet, when* NEHUSHTA *appears in the doorway behind her.* ATOSSA *hears her and rises suddenly, overturning the chair on which she has been sitting. The chair is quickly righted by a slave.*

ATOSSA (*in cool surprise*).—It is rarely indeed that the queen Nehushta deigns to visit her servant. Had she sent warning of her coming she would have been more fittingly received.

NEHUSHTA (*after a short struggle to master her emotion*).—We have small need of court formalities. I desire to speak with you alone upon a matter of importance.

ATOSSA (*seating herself and motioning to Nehushta to be seated*).—I am alone.

NEHUSHTA (*remaining standing*).—You are not alone.

ATOSSA.—They are not women—they are slaves.

NEHUSHTA.—Will you send them away?

ATOSSA.—Why should I?

NEHUSHTA.—You need not—I will. (*Turning to the women.*) Begone, and quickly! (*They scurry away after a moment's hesitation.*)

ATOSSA (*fiercely angry, tapping the floor with her foot—but speaking in a low voice*). Strange ways you have!

NEHUSHTA.—I am not come here to wrangle with you about your slaves. They will obey me without wrangling. I met Zoroaster in the gardens an hour since.

ATOSSA (*sneeringly*).—By a previous arrangement, of course? (*She fastens her eye on Nehushta with a strange and deadly look.*)

NEHUSHTA (*in a fierce low voice*).—Hold your peace and listen to me. (*She reaches for a small Indian knife in her girdle.*) Tell me the truth. Did Zoroaster love you three years ago—when I saw you in his arms upon the terrace the morning when he came back from Ecbatana?

ATOSSA (*always watching Nehushta closely*).—I loved him. I love him yet, and I hate you more than I love him. Do you understand?

NEHUSHTA (*half-breathless with anger*).—Speak—go on!

ATOSSA (*slowly*).—I loved him, and I hated you. I hate you still. The letter I had from him was written to you—but it was brought to me. Nay—be not so angry, it was very long ago. Of course you can murder me, if you please—you have me in your power, and you are but a cowardly Jew, like twenty of my slave-women. I fear you not. Perhaps you would like to hear the end? (*Nehushta has been slowly approaching Atossa until now Nehushta stands over her. Atossa suddenly seizes the dagger.*) You shall hear the end now and you shall not murder me with your Indian poisoner here. (*Laughs and looks at blade.*) I was talking with Zoroaster when I saw you upon the stairs, and then—oh, it was so sweet! I cried out that he should never leave me again, and I threw my arms about his neck—his lordly neck that you so loved!—and I fell, so that he had to hold me up. And you saw him. Oh, it was sweet! It was the sweetest moment of my life when I heard you groan and hurry away and leave us! It was to hurt you that I did it—that I humbled my queenliness before him: but I loved him; though—and he, he your lover, whom you despised then and cast away for this black-faced king of ours—he thrust me from him, and pushed me off, and drove me weeping to my chamber; and he said he loved me not, nor wished my love. Ay, that was

bitter, for I was ashamed—I who never was ashamed of man or woman. But there was more sweetness in your torment than bitterness in my shame. He never knew you were there. He never knew why you left him—he thought it was to wear the king's purple, to thrust a bit of gold in your hair! He must have suffered—you have suffered too—such delicious torture, I have often soothed myself to sleep with the thought of it. It is very sweet for me to see you lying there with my wound in your heart. It will rankle long; you cannot get it out—you are married to the king now, and Zoroaster has turned priest for love of you. I think even the king would hardly love you if he could see you now—you look so pale. I will send for the Chaldæan physician—you might die. I should be sorry if you died, you could not suffer any more then. I could not give up the pleasure of hurting you—you have no idea how delicious it is. Oh, how I hate you! (*With these last words Atossa rises to her feet, Nehushta, in dumb horror has shrunk back until she leans against the door grasping the curtain with one hand and pressing her heart with the other.*) Shall I tell you more? Should you like to hear more of the truth? I could tell you the king—(*Nehushta throws up her hands and presses her temples, and with a low wail flees through the doorway and the curtains close behind her.*) She will tell the king. I care not—but I will keep the knife.

CURTAIN.

THE SUFFERING OF NEHUSHTA.

II.—NEHUSHTA AND ZOROASTER.

CHARACTERS.

Nehushta, *Queen of Persia.*

Zoroaster, *High Priest of Persia, tall, majestic, dressed in priestly robes, with long white hair and beard.*

Two slave women, *attendants on the Queen.*

Situation.—*Nehushta, dressed in flowing robes with her beautiful, black hair falling over shoulders, and with a light tiara on her head, goes to a secluded spot in the garden to hold an interview with* ZOROASTER, *in order to ascertain if he loves her as he once did.* ZOROASTER *has the calm and majesty of another world in his bearing and voice. He has risen above earthly loves.*

NEHUSHTA *enters, preceded by a slave woman who arranges a soft seat for her and then stands one side. Another slave carries a large fan which she waves over her mistress.* NEHUSHTA *hesitates in thought and then turns to the first attendant.*

NEHUSHTA.—Go thou and seek out the high priest Zoroaster, and bring him hither quickly. (*The woman hurries away and Nehushta sinks down on the chair with a weary look of weakness. The slave returns and pauses at the doorway while Zoroaster enters, approaches slowly and makes a deep obeisance.*) Forgive me that I sent for thee, Zoroaster.

Forgive me—I have something to say which thou must hear. (*He stands looking at her silently but earnestly.*) I wronged thee three years ago, Zoroaster. (*She looks up at him.*) I pray thee, forgive me—— I knew not what I did.

ZOROASTER.—I forgave thee long ago.

NEHUSHTA.—I did thee a bitter wrong--but the wrong I did myself was even greater. I never knew till I went and asked—*her!* (*Her eyes flash and her fingers clench; then in an instant, her sad, weary look returns.*) That is all—if you forgive me. (*She turns her head away.*)

ZOROASTER.—Now, by Ahura Mazda, I have indeed forgiven thee. The blessing of the All-Wise be upon thee! (*He bends again and then turns away.*)

NEHUSHTA (*as she hears him step*).—You loved me once.

ZOROASTER.—Ay—I loved you once—but not now. There is no more love in the earth for me. But I bless you for the love you gave me.

NEHUSHTA.—I loved you so well—(*She suddenly rises and gazes at him with a wild, passionate look.*) I love you still. Oh! I love you still! I thought I had put you away—forgotten you—trodden out your memory, that I so hated I could not bear to hear your name! Ah! why did I do it, miserable woman that I am! I love you now—I love you—I love you with my whole heart——and it is too late! (*She sinks back into her chair, covering her face with her hands and sobbing passionately.*)

ZOROASTER (*He stands a moment calm and sorrowful, gazing on her as from another world*).—Nehushta, it is not meet that you should thus weep for anything that is past. Be comforted; the years of life are few, and you are one of the great ones of the earth. It is needful that all should suffer. Forget not that although your heart be heavy, you are a queen, and must bear yourself as a queen. Take

your life strongly in your hands and live it. The end is not far and your peace is at hand.

NEHUSHTA (*looking up suddenly at these last words and sighing heavily*).—You, who are a priest and a prophet,—you who read the heaven as it were a book—tell me, Zoroaster, is it not far? Shall we meet beyond the stars, as you used to tell me——so long ago?

ZOROASTER (*with a gentle smile*).—It is not far. Take courage—for truly it is not far. (*He gazes earnestly into her eyes for a moment, then turns and goes away. A look of peace descends on her tired face; she falls backward in her chair as her slave women come up, and she closes her eyes.*)

CURTAIN.

THE SUFFERING OF NEHUSHTA.

III.—THE PRIESTS AND THE PILLAGERS.

CHARACTERS.

Nehushta, *as before.*

Zoroaster, *as before.*

A Maiden, *a little Syrian slave, attendant on* NEHUSHTA.

A group of Priests of Persia.

A mob of Pillagers.

Situation.—*Darius the king is absent from the capital. A troop of wild eastern riders swoop down from the hills on the city.* NEHUSHTA *tries to give the alarm to* ZOROASTER *and thus save her beloved. This scene is their meeting.*

ZOROASTER *is standing behind the altar, on which is burning a small flame. The priests stand round in ranks chanting in a low tone.* NEHUSHTA *suddenly bursts in with the report that the city is assaulted.*

The curtain rises upon the PRIESTS *before the altar, with* ZOROASTER *behind it, chanting.*

PRIESTS.—Praise we the All-Wise God, who hath made and created the years and the ages;

Praise him who in the heavens hath sown and hath scattered the seed of the stars;

Praise him who moves between the three ages that are and that have been, and shall be;

Praise him who rides on death, in whose hand are all power and honor and glory;

Praise him—— (*Nehushta enters.*)

NEHUSHTA (*rushing forward and laying one hand on Zoroaster's shoulder*).—Zoroaster—fly—there is yet time. The enemy are come in thousands—they are in the palace. There is barely time!

ZOROASTER (*taking her hand from his shoulder*).—Go thou, and save thyself. I will not go. If it be the will of the All-Wise that I perish, I will perish before this altar. Go thou quickly, and save thyself while there is yet time.

NEHUSHTA (*taking his hand in hers and looking very lovingly and sadly into his calm eyes*).—Knowest thou not, Zoroaster, that I would rather die with thee than live with any other? I swear to thee, by the God of my fathers, I will not leave thee.

Enter Syrian Maid, running, but stopped by the crowd of Priests.

SYRIAN MAID.—There is no more time! There is no more time! Ye are all dead men! Behold, they are breaking down the doors! (*Sounds of blows from without are heard. Some of the priests start towards the door but are stopped by the maid.*) Ye are dead men and there is no salvation—ye must die like men. Let me go to my mistress. (*She pushes through them.*)

NEHUSHTA (*staring wildly upon the priests*).—Can none of you save him?

A PRIEST.—We will save him and thee if we are able. We will take you between us and open the doors, and it may be that we can fight our way out—though we are all slain, he may be saved. (*He lays hold of Zoroaster.*)

ZOROASTER (*putting him back gently*).—Ye cannot save me, for my hour is come. (*He seems transfigured.*) The foe are as a thousand men against one. Here we must die like men, and like priests of the Lord before His altar. Now therefore I beseech you to think not of this death which we must suffer in our mortal bodies, but to open your eyes to the things which are not mortal and which perish not eternally. For man is but a frail and changing creature. His life is not longer than the lives of other created things, and he is delicate and sickly and exposed to manifold dangers from his birth. But the soul of man dieth not, neither is there any taint of death in it, but it liveth for ever and is made glorious above the stars. For the stars also shall have an end, and the earth—even as our bodies must end this night; but our souls shall see the glory of God, the All-Wise, and shall live. The morning cometh, after which there shall be no evening.——(*There is a crash without and discordant yells, then silence.*)

NEHUSHTA (*her head falls forward on Zoroaster's breast; her arms clasp him wildly, as his clasp her*).—Oh, Zoroaster, my beloved, my beloved! Say not any more that I am unfaithful, for I have been faithful even unto death, and I shall be with you beyond the stars for ever!

ZOROASTER.—Beyond the stars and forever! In the light of the glory of God most high! (*The besiegers rush in.*)

TABLEAU.

CURTAIN.

GENTLEMEN, THE KING!

Adapted from a short story, by Robert Barr, entitled "Gentlemen, the King!"

CHARACTERS.

Rudolph, *king of Alluria, tall, commanding, honest-looking, with hair turning gray.*

Staumm, *a count, tall, gaunt, erect,—owner of the lodge.*

Brunfels, *a baron, obstinate, rough, outspoken, and brave.*

Steinmetz, *ex-chancellor, crafty, fox-like, cowardly.*

Seven other lords of the realm.

Situation.—*In a rough hunting-lodge in the wilderness, twelve leagues from the capital of Alluria are ten men gathered in groups round a large oaken table. The room is lighted by blazing logs which fill an enormous fire-place on one side of the room. On the opposite side is a barrel of wine. Numerous flagons are on the table, and on a shelf at the side are more flagons and some dice boxes.*

These men are the nobles of the realm, and are met on this exceedingly tempestuous night to discuss the removal of the king.

The rising curtain discovers eight men in various groups about the table, talking seriously amid their flagons.

COUNT STAUMM *is standing at the end of the table watching the others. Another lord is drawing a flagon of wine from the barrel in the corner.*

BRUNFELS (*bringing his huge fist down on the table, speaking in a loud, rough tone*).—I tell you, I will not have the king killed. Such a proposal goes beyond what was intended when we banded ourselves together. The king is a fool, so let him escape like a fool. I am a conspirator, but not an assassin.

STEINMETZ (*suavely, as if to calm the boisterous spirit of Brunfels*).—It is not assassination, but justice.

BRUNFELS (*contemptuously*).—Justice! You have learned that cant word in the cabinet of the king himself, before he thrust you out. He eternally prates of justice; yet, much as I loathe him, I have no wish to compass his death.

STEINMETZ (*in a calm, argumentative tone*).—If the king escapes he will take up his abode in a neighboring territory, and there will inevitably follow plots and counter-plots for his restoration; thus Alluria will be kept in a constant state of turmoil. There will doubtless grow up within the kingdom itself a party sworn to his restoration. We shall thus be involved in difficulties at home and abroad, and all for what? Merely to save the life of a man who is an enemy to each of us. We place thousands of life in jeopardy; render our own positions insecure; bring continual disquiet upon the state, when all might be avoided by the slitting of one throat, even though that throat belong to the king. (*All look convinced except Baron Brunfels who sets down his flagon with a thump on the table as if to reply.*)

STAUMM (*conciliatingly*).—Argument is ever the enemy of good comradeship. Let us settle the point at once, and finally with the dice-box. Baron Brunfels, you are too seasoned a gambler to object to such a mode of terminating

a discussion. Steinmetz, the law, of which you are so distinguished a representative, is often compared to a lottery; so you cannot look with disfavor upon a method that is as conclusive and as reasonably fair as the average decision of a judge. Let us throw, therefore, for the life of the king. I, as chairman of this meeting, will be umpire. Single throws, and the highest number wins. Baron Brunfels, you will act for the king, and if you win may bestow upon the monarch his life. Chancellor Steinmetz stands for the state. If he wins, then is the king's life forfeit. Gentlemen, are you agreed?

ALL (*but Brunfels*).—Agreed, agreed! (*Brunfels mutters under his breath until the dice-box is brought from the shelf. Steinmetz takes the box and is shaking it, as three stout raps are given on the door from without, apparently with the hilt of a sword. All start to their feet. The knocking is repeated.*)

KING (*outside*).—Open, I beg of you.

STAUMM (*approaching the door stealthily*).—Who is there?

KING (*still without*).—A wayfarer, weary and wet, who seeks shelter from the storm.

STAUMM.—My house is already filled. I have no room for another.

KING (*with a tone of decision*).—Open the door peacefully, and do not put me to the necessity of forcing it. (*All recognize the voice and turn pale. Steinmetz rises to his feet with terror-stricken face and chattering teeth. Staumm looks over his shoulder as if to ask what he is to do.*)

BRUNFELS (*hissing in low tone*).—In the fiend's name, if you are so frightened when it comes to a knock at the door, what will it be when the real knocks are upon you? Open, Count, and let the insistent stranger in. Whether he leave the place alive or no, there are ten men here to

answer. (*Staumm unbars the door. Enter the* KING *wrapped in a dark cloak dripping wet. The door is barred again. After a moment's pause, the stranger flings off his cloak and hat. The conspirators all now recognize him and are struck speechless. He looks round the group slowly and then speaks firmly.*)

KING.—Gentlemen, I give you good evening; and if Count Staumm will act as cup-bearer, we will drown all remembrance of a barred door in a flagon of wine; for to tell the truth, gentlemen, I have ridden hard in order to have the pleasure of drinking with you. (*He casts a glance of piercing intensity upon the company, and more than one quails before it. Staumm takes a flagon from the shelf, fills it at the barrel and presents it to the king with a low bow. The king holds it aloft.*) Gentlemen, I give you a suitable toast. May none here gathered encounter a more pitiless storm than that which is raging without. (*All are standing as the toast is announced.*) I ask you to be seated. (*He waves his hand. All sit but Brunfels. All fear that he will tell the king the object of the meeting.*) My Lord of Brunfels (*the king smiles*), I see that I have interrupted you at your old pleasure of dicing. While requesting you to continue your game as though I had not joined you, may I venture to hope the stakes you play for are not high?

BRUNFELS (*with a frown and a growl*).—Your Majesty, the stakes are the highest that a gambler may play for.

KING.—You tempt me, Baron, to guess that the hazard is a man's soul; but I see that your adversary is my worthy ex-chancellor, and as I should hesitate to impute to him the character of the devil, I am led to the conclusion that you play for a human life. Whose life is in the cast, my Lord of Brunfels?

STEINMETZ (*rising with indecision to his feet and speaking with a trembling voice*).—I beg your gracious permission to explain the reason of our gathering——

KING (*sternly*).—Herr Steinmetz, when I desire your interference I shall call for it; and remember this, Herr Steinmetz, the man who begins a game must play it to the end, even though he finds luck running against him. (*Steinmetz sits down and mops his brow.*)

BRUNFELS (*defiantly*).—Your Majesty, I speak not for my comrades, but for myself. I begin no game I am afraid to finish. We were about to dice in order to discover whether your Majesty should live or die. (*A moan arises from the conspirators.*)

KING (*smiling again*).—Baron, I have ever chided myself for loving you. Even when your overbearing, obstinate intolerance compelled me to dismiss you from the command of my army, I could not but admire your sturdy honesty. Had I been able to graft your love of truth upon some of my councillors what a valuable group of advisers I might have gathered round me!—Enough of comedy, now tragedy sets in. Why am I here? Why do two hundred mounted and armed men surround this doomed chalet? Miserable wretches, what have you to say that judgment be not instantly passed upon you?

BRUNFELS (*draws his sword and rushes on the king*).—I have this to say, that whatever may befall this assemblage, you at least shall not live to boast of it.

KING (*he stands unmoved at motions of Brunfels whom Staumm and others seize*).—My Lord of Brunfels, sheath your sword. Your ancestors have often drawn it, but always for, and never against the occupant of the throne. Now, gentlemen, hear my decision, and abide faithfully by it. Seat yourselves at the table, five on each side, the dice-box

between you. You shall not be disappointed, but shall play out the game of life and death. Each dices with his opposite. He who throws the highest number escapes. He who throws the lowest, places his weapons on the empty chair and stands against yonder wall to be executed for the traitor that he is. Thus half of your company shall live, and the other half shall seek death with such courage as may be granted them. Do you agree or shall I give the signal?

ALL (*except Brunfels, who still stands*).—Agreed!

KING.—Come, Baron, you and my devoted ex-chancellor were about to play when I came in. Begin the game.

BRUNFELS (*sits down*).—Very well. Steinmetz the dice-box is near your hand; throw. (*Some one gathers dice, puts them in the box and hands it to Steinmetz, whose hand trembles so that he has no need to shake it. The dice roll out on the table.*)

ANY OR ALL (*looking at dice*).—Eight in all.

KING.—Eight! Now, Baron.

BRUNFELS (*carelessly throwing the dice into the box and then playing.*)—Three sixes! If I only had such luck when I played for money!

STEINMETZ (*his eyes bulge out from fear*).—We have three throws.

KING.—Not so.

STEINMETZ (*springing from his chair*).—I swear I understood that we were to have three chances. But it is all illegal, and not to be borne. I will not have my life diced away to please either kings or commons. (*He draws his sword and stands in an attitude of defense.*)

KING.—Seize him; disarm him, and bind him. There are enough gentlemen in this company to see that the rules of the game are adhered to. (*Steinmetz is speedily over-*

powered, bound, and placed against the wall, where his writhing grows more and more intense.) Count Staumm it is now your turn to take the box.

STAUMM (*he solemnly throws the dice*).—Six! (*His opponent throws and his neighbors call out, "sixteen."*) Sixteen! (*He rises, bows to the king and then to the company, draws his sword, breaks it over his knee and takes his place at the wall.*)

KING.—Gentlemen, proceed.

FIRST GENTLEMAN (*after shaking*).—Eleven!

OPPONENT.—Nine! (*He rises, draws his sword, leaves it on his chair and takes his place, after bowing to king.*)

SECOND GENTLEMAN.—Eleven! (*He looks anxious.*)

OPPONENT.—Fourteen! (*Second Gentleman takes his place as the others have.*)

THIRD GENTLEMAN.—Five!

OPPONENT.—Twelve! (*Third Gentleman takes his place, while the king sadly looks over the line.*)

BRUNFELS (*shifting uneasily in his seat and looking at his sentenced comrades*).—Your Majesty, I am always loath to see a coward die. The whimperings of your former chancellor annoy me; therefore will I gladly take his place and give to him the life and liberty you perhaps design for me, if in exchange I have the privilege of speaking my mind regarding you and your precious kingship.

KING.—Unbind the valiant Steinmetz.—Speak your mind freely, Baron Brunfels.

BRUNFELS (*he rises, draws his sword and places it on the table*).—Your Majesty, backed by brute force, has condemned to death five of your subjects. (*He points to the five by the wall.*) You have branded us as traitors, and such we are, and so find no fault with your sentence. You for the time being have the upper hand. You have re-

minded me that my ancestors fought for yours and they never turned their swords against their sovereign. Why, then have our swords been pointed toward your breast? Because, King Rudolph, you are yourself a traitor. You belong to the ruling class, and have turned your back upon your order. You, a king, have made yourself a brother to the demagogue on the street corner. You have shorn nobility of its privileges, and for what?

KING.—And for what? For this: that the plowman on the plain may reap what he has sown; that the shepherd on the hillside may enjoy the increase which comes to his flock; that taxation may be light; that peace and security shall rest on the land; that bloodthirsty swashbucklers shall not go up and down, inciting the people to carnage and rapine under the name of patriotism; that the kingdom of Alluria may live in amity with its neighbors, attending to its own affairs and meddling not with the concerns of others. This is the task I set myself when I came to the throne. What fault have you to find with the program, my Lord Baron?

BRUNFELS (*calmly*).—The simple fault that it is the program of a fool. In following it you have gained the resentment of your nobles and have not even received the thanks of those pitiable hinds, the plowmen in the valley, or the shepherds on the hills. You are hated in cot and castle alike. You would not stand in your place for a moment, were not an army behind you. Being a fool, you think the common people like honesty, whereas they only curse that they have not a share in the thieving.

KING (*soberly*).—The people have been misled. Had it been possible for me personally to explain to them the good that must accrue to the land where honesty rules, I am confident I would have had their united and undivided support, even though my nobles deserted me.

BRUNFELS.—Not so, your Majesty; they would listen to you and cheer you, but when the next orator came among them, promising to divide the moon and give a share to each, they would gather round his banner and hoot you from the kingdom. What care they for rectitude of government? They see no farther than the shining florin that glitters on their palm. They shrug their shoulders when your honesty is mentioned. And now, Rudolph of Alluria, I have done, and I go the more jauntily to my death that I have had fair speech with you before the end.

KING (*he has been gazing on the floor, and now sighs, and looks at them sorrowfully*).—I thought until to-night that I possessed some qualities at least of a ruler of men. I came here alone among you, and although there are brave men in this company, yet I had the ordering of events as I chose to order them, notwithstanding that odds stood ten to one against me. I have now to inform you that the insurrection so carefully prepared has broken prematurely out. My capital is in possession of factions, who are industriously cutting each other's throats to settle which one of two smooth-tongued rascals shall be their president. While you were dicing to settle the fate of an already deposed king, and I was sentencing you to a mythical death, we were all alike being involved in common ruin. I have no horsemen at my back, and have stumbled here blindly, a much bedraggled fugitive, having lost my way in every sense of the phrase. And so I beg of the hospitality of Count Staumm another flagon of wine, and either a place of shelter for my patient horse, left too long in the storm without, or else direction towards the frontier, whereupon my horse and I will set out to find it.

BRUNFELS (*seizes his sword and holds it aloft*).—Not towards the frontier, but towards the capital! We will

surround you, and hew for you a way through that fickle mob back to the throne of your ancestors.

ALL (*each man springs for his weapon and brandishes it overhead*).—The king! the king!

KING (*smiling*).—Not so. I leave a thankless throne with a joy I find it impossible to express. I am filled with amazement that men will actually fight for the position of ruler of the people. Whether the insurrection has brought freedom to themselves or not, the future will alone tell; but it has at least brought freedom to me. I now belong to myself. No man can question either my motives or my acts. Gentlemen, drink with me to the new president of Alluria, whoever he may be. (*The king drinks alone.*)

BRUNFELS (*raising his glass*).—Gentlemen, *the King!*

ALL (*raising high their glasses, while the king bows his head in solemn acknowledgement*).—The king!

CURTAIN.

BEN-HUR AND IRAS.

Adapted from "Ben-Hur," by Lew Wallace.

CHARACTERS.

Iras, *a beautiful Egyptian woman.*

Ben-Hur, *a very powerfully built young Jew.*

Situation.—IRAS *and her aged father have been for some days the guests of* BEN-HUR, *whom the personal charms of* IRAS *have completely captivated. She is really in love with* MESSALA, *a hated rival of* BEN-HUR *in the great chariot-race at Antioch, and has been spying out the secrets of* BEN-HUR'S *life for the use of* MESSALA, *who, in losing the chariot-race, lost an immense sum of money to* BEN-HUR.

BEN-HUR *is in the room. Enter* IRAS.

IRAS (*sharply*).—Your coming is timely, O son of Hur, I wish to thank you for hospitality; after to-morrow I shall not have the opportunity to do so. (*Ben-Hur bows slightly.*) When the game is over, the dice-players refer to their tablets and put a crown upon the happy winner. We have had a game—it has lasted through many days and nights. Why, now that it is at an end, shall we not see to which the chaplet belongs?

BEN-HUR (*lightly*).—A man may not balk a woman bent on having her way.

IRAS.—Tell me, O prince of Jerusalem, where is he, that son of the carpenter of Nazareth, and son not less of God, from whom so lately such mighty things were expected?

BEN-HUR (*impatiently*).—I am not his keeper.

IRAS (*with a sneer*).—Has he broken Rome to pieces? (*Ben-Hur raises his hand angrily to stop her.*) Where has he seated his capital? Cannot I go see his throne and its lions of bronze? And his palace—he raised the dead; and to such a one, what is it to raise a golden house? He has but to stamp his foot and say the word and the house is pillared like Karnak, and wanting nothing.

BEN-HUR (*in good humor*).—O Egypt, let us wait another day, even another week for him, the lions and the palace.

IRAS (*without noticing the interruption*).—And how is it I see you in that garb? Such is not the habit of governors in India or vice-kings elsewhere. I saw the satrap of Teheran once and he wore a turban of silk and a cloak of cloth of gold, and the hilt and scabbard of his sword made me dizzy with their splendor of precious stones. I thought Osiris had lent him a glory from the sun. I fear you have not entered upon your kingdom—the kingdom I was to share with you.

BEN-HUR (*courteously*).—The daughter of my wise guest is kinder than she imagines herself; she is teaching me that Isis may kiss a heart without making it better.

IRAS.—For a Jew, the son of Hur is clever. I saw your dreaming Cæsar make his entry into Jerusalem. I beheld the procession descend the mountain bringing him. I heard their singing. I looked everywhere among them for a figure with a promise of royalty—a horseman in purple, a chariot with a driver in shining brass, a stately warrior behind an orbed shield, rivalling his spear in stature. I looked

for his guard. It would have been pleasant to have seen a prince of Jerusalem and a cohort of the legions of Galilee. (*With a look of disdain she laughs heartily.*) I did not laugh. I said to myself, "Wait. In the Temple he will glorify himself as becomes a hero about to take possession of the world." I saw him enter the Gate of Shushan and the Court of the Women. I saw him stop and stand before the Gate Beautiful. There were people with me on the porch and in the courts. I will say a million of people all waiting breathlessly to hear his proclamation. The pillars were not more still than we. Ha, ha, ha! I fancied I heard the axles of the mighty Roman machine begin to crack. Ha, ha, ha! O prince, by the soul of Solomon, your King of the World drew his gown about him and walked away, and out by the farthest gate, nor opened his mouth to say a word; and—the Roman machine is running yet!

BEN-HUR (*bows his head during the last part of this long speech and then answers with dignity*).—Daughter of Balthasar, if this be the game of which you spoke to me, take the chaplet—I accord it yours. Only let us make an end of words. That you have a purpose, I am sure. To it, I pray, and I will answer you; then let us go our several ways and forget we ever met. Say on; I will listen, but not to more of that which you have given me.

IRAS (*after scanning him carefully from head to foot for a moment*).— You have my leave—go.

BEN-HUR.—Peace to you. (*He walks away.*)

IRAS (*as he is passing out the door*).—A word. (*Ben-Hur stops and looks back.*) Consider all I know about you.

BEN-HUR (*returns*).—O most fair Egyptian, what all do you know about me?

IRAS (*absently*).—You are more of a Roman, son of Hur, than any of your Hebrew brethren.

BEN-HUR (*indifferently*).—Am I so unlike my countrymen?

IRAS.—The demi-gods are all Roman now.

BEN-HUR.—And therefore you will tell me what more you know about me?

IRAS.—The likeness is not lost upon me. It might induce me to save you.

BEN-HUR.—Save me!

IRAS (*slowly and distinctly*).—There was a Jew, an escaped galley-slave, who killed a man in the Palace of Idernee. (*Ben-Hur starts.*) The same Jew slew a Roman soldier before the Market-place here in Jerusalem; the same Jew has three trained legions from Galilee to seize the Roman governor to-night; the same Jew has alliances perfected for war upon Rome, and Ilderim the Sheik is one of his partners. (*Draws near to him.*) You have lived in Rome. Suppose these things repeated in ears we know of. Ah! you change color. (*He recoils as if she were a tiger.*) You know the Lord Sejanus. Suppose it were told him with the proofs—or without the proofs—that the same Jew is the richest man in the East—nay, in all the empire. The fishes of the Tiber would have fattening other than that they dig out of its ooze, would they not? And while they were feeding—ha! son of Hur!—what splendor there would be on exhibition in the Circus! Was there ever an artist the equal of the Lord Sejanus?

BEN-HUR (*with an enforced calmness*).—To give you pleasure, daughter of Egypt, I acknowledge your cunning and that I am at your mercy. I have no hope of your favor. I could kill you, but you are a woman. The Desert is open to receive me; and though Rome is a good hunter

of men, there she would follow long and far before she caught me, for in its heart there are wildernesses of spears as well as wildernesses of sand, and it is not unlovely to the unconquered Parthian. In the toils as I am—dupe that I have been—yet there is one thing my due: who told you all you know about me? In flight or captivity, dying even, there will be consolation in leaving the traitor the curse of a man who has lived knowing nothing but wretchedness. Who told you all you know about me?

IRAS (*with some sympathy*).—Enough that from this person I gathered a handful of circumstances and from that other yet another handful, and afterwhile I put them together, and was happy as a woman can be who has at disposal the fortune and life of a man whom—— (*She taps the floor with her foot and looks away from him.*)—whom she is at loss what to do with.

BEN-HUR.—No, it is not enough, it is not enough. To-morrow you will determine what to do with me. I may die.

IRAS.—True, I had something from Sheik Ilderim as he lay with my father in a grove out in the Desert. The night was still, very still, and walls of the tent, sooth to say, were poor ward against ears outside listening to—birds and beetles flying through the air. (*She smiles.*) Some other things—bits of shell for the picture—I had from——

BEN-HUR.—Whom?

IRAS.—The son of Hur himself.

BEN-HUR.—Was there no other who contributed?

IRAS.—No, not one.

BEN-HUR (*with a sigh of relief*).—Thanks. It were not well to keep the Lord Sejanus waiting for you. The Desert is not so sensitive. Again, O Egypt, peace! (*He turns to depart.*)

IRAS (*reaching out her jewelled hand*).—Stay! (*He looks back but does not take the hand.*) Stay, and do not distrust me, O son of Hur, if I declare I know why the noble Arrius took you for his heir. (*Very earnestly.*) And by Iris! by all the gods of Egypt! I swear I tremble to think of you, so brave and generous, under the hand of the remorseless minister. You have left a portion of your youth in the atria of the great capital; consider, as I do, what the Desert will be to you in contrast of life. Oh, I give you pity—pity! And if you but do what I say, I will save you. That also I swear by our holy Isis!

BEN-HUR (*hesitatingly*).—Almost — almost I believe you.

IRAS (*rapidly, with animation*).—The perfect life for a woman is to live in love; the greatest happiness for a man is the conquest of himself; and that, O prince, is what I have to ask of you.—You had once a friend. It was in your boyhood. There was a quarrel and you and he became enemies. He did you wrong. After many years you met him again in the Circus at Antioch.

BEN-HUR.—Messala!

IRAS (*with earnest entreaty*).—Yes, Messala. You are his creditor. Forgive the past; admit him to friendship again; restore the fortune he lost in the great wager; rescue him. The six talents are as nothing to you; not so much as a bud lost upon a tree already in full leaf; but to him—Ah! he must go about in a broken body; wherever you meet him he must look up to you from the ground. O Ben-Hur, noble prince! to a Roman descended as he is, beggary is the other most odious name for death. Save him from beggary!

BEN-HUR.—The appeal has been decided then, and for once a Messala takes nothing. I must go and write it in

my book of great occurrences—a judgment by a Roman against a Roman! But did he—did Messala send you to me with this request, O Egypt?

IRAS.—He has a noble nature, and judged you by it. (*Her hand is on his arm.*)

BEN-HUR (*taking her hand*).—As you know him in such friendly way, fair Egyptian, tell me, would he do for me, there being a reversal of the conditions, that he asks of me? Answer, by Isis! Answer, for the truth's sake!

IRAS.—Oh! he is——

BEN-HUR.—A Roman, you were about to say; meaning that I, being a Jew, must forgive him my winnings because he is a Roman. If you have more to tell me, daughter of Balthazar, speak quickly, quickly; for by the Lord God of Israel, when this heat of blood, hotter waxing, attains its highest, I may not be able longer to see that you are a woman, and beautiful! I may see but the spy of a master the more hateful because the master is a Roman. Say on, and quickly.

IRAS (*throwing off his hand and stepping back*).—Thou drinker of lees, feeder upon husks! To think I could love thee, having seen Messala! Such as thou were born to serve him. He would have been satisfied with release of the six talents; but I say to the six thou shalt add twenty—twenty, dost thou hear? The merchant here is thy keeper of moneys. If by to-morrow at noon he has not thy order acted upon in favor of my Messala for six-and-twenty talents—mark the sum!—thou shalt settle with the Lord Sejanus. Be wise and—farewell. (*She moves toward the door.*)

BEN-HUR (*putting himself in her way*).—The old Egypt lives in you. Whether you see Messala to-morrow or the next day, here or in Rome, give him this message. Tell

him I have back the money, even the six talents, he robbed me of by robbing my father's estate; tell him I survived the galleys to which he had me sent, and in my strength rejoice in his beggary and dishonor; tell him I think the affliction of body which he has from my hand is the curse of our Lord God of Israel upon him more fit than death for his crimes against the helpless: tell him my mother and sister, whom he had sent to a cell in Antonia, that they might die of leprosy, are alive and well, thanks to the power of the Nazarene whom you so despise; tell him that along with my defiance I do not send him a curse in words, but, as a better expression of undying hate, I send him one who will prove to him the sum of all curses; and when he looks at you repeating this, my message, daughter of Balthasar, his Roman shrewdness will tell him all I mean. Go now—and I will go. (*He conducts her to the door with ceremonious politeness, and as she disappears, she adds.*) Peace to you.

CURTAIN.

SAVONAROLA AND LORENZO.

Adapted from a tragedy "Savonarola" by Alfred Austin, Poet Laureate.

CHARACTERS.

Girolamo Savonarola, *Prior of St. Marks.*

Lorenzo de' Medici, *Ruler of Florence.*

Situation.—SAVONAROLA *is opposed to the rule of* FLORENCE *by any one man, and so* LORENZO *is counted his enemy. But his religious austerities and his fiery eloquence have made him friends and foes among the populace. So high is his virtue and so great his influence that* LORENZO, *in addition to his regular priest, summons* SAVONAROLA *to hear his last confession.* LORENZO *was a great patron of classical learning; hence the reference to* PLATO.

SAVONAROLA *was very tall and thin. Pictures of him may be found readily. He would, of course, be dressed in his flowing black priestly robes.* LORENZO *is reclining on his couch very near the time of his death.*

LORENZO, *having dismissed his followers, on the announcement of* SAVONAROLA *is reclining alone.*

My intimates!
The best men ever had, but helpless now
To hold me here or cheer me thitherward.
Of all the company of hearts that sit
Round our existence smiling, that not one

Should be told off to see us to the land,
The road of which we know not! That seems hard.
To be alone in the full glare of life
Lulls fear to sleep. But loneliness in death
Might make the most intrepid spirit take
Shadows for substance. (*The door opens and* SAVONAROLA *appears. He pauses in the doorway.* LORENZO *motions to him to approach.*)

LORENZO.—Will you approach, good Prior? 'Tis not from lack
Of reverence for your habit, that I fail
To greet you more becomingly, but death
That glues my limbs.

SAVONAROLA (*advancing*).—No need to rise, Lorenzo,
Heaven lays no tax of courtly ceremony;
But, being far more exorbitant, it claims
Full payment of the substance from the soul.
Why have you sent for me?

LORENZO.— To readjust,
Before I journey on, unbalanced wrongs
That gall my conscience.

SAVONAROLA.— Show me them!
Since that it seems Plato avails not now.
Philosophy, like any false ally,
Comes to man's aid when need is at the least,
To shrink away in true extremity.
But Virtue, unaffected friend, contrives
To pull us through, though all the fiends conspire
To wedge us in with evil.

LORENZO.— I have made
Elsewhere confession of my homelier sins.
But those transgressions that have walked abroad
In all men's eyes, I have reserved for one

Who knows no private favor.

SAVONAROLA.— Then speak on!
Death is the looking-glass of life wherein
Each man may scan the aspect of his deeds.
How looks it now Lorenzo, now that God
Holds that unflattering mirror to your soul?

LORENZO.—'Tis hard on twenty years since, but still, still,
The cry of sacked Volterra haunts my ears.

SAVONAROLA.—And well it may, Lorenzo! Do you think
Thus to divide eternity? Twenty years
Have placed no second 'twixt your sin and you.

LORENZO.—I know it, Prior; and poignantly confess
To you and Heaven, the guilt was mostly mine.
Endorsing claims equivocal to glut
The yawning coffers of the State, I clutched
A shadowy right; the alum mines were won,
And now the gain lies leaden on my breast
Though bade I not the slaughter.

SAVONAROLA.— Hold! We bid
Whatever buttresses our bold designs,
And are the architects of every wrong
Raised o'er the ruins of demolished right.
You cannot take before the throne of God
The quarry of your hunting; but the blood
Clings to your hands.

LORENZO.— Seem they so very red?
So red, contrition cannot wash them white?
For there is other gore that soaks my skirt
Spilt in the usurious payment of the blow
Struck by the Pazzi at my life, but spilt
Not from vindictiveness but policy.

SAVONAROLA.—Will policy avail to change the score

Of the Recording Angel? Hell is full
Of politic expedients, condoned
By Earth, to double their offence 'fore Heaven.
God saved your life; you slew your enemies. (LORENZO *exhibits signs of agitation.*)
Yet will He pardon even as He saved,
So anguish in the balance lift up guilt.
Is your confession ended?

LORENZO.— Alas! no.
Full many an orphan maiden hath been robbed
Of dowry guaranteed; and virtue, shorn
Of its substantial outbreak, hath succumbed
To the besieger. This seems direst wrong——

SAVONAROLA.—And is a direst wrong. The body pushed
Out of this life precociously may find
A better tenement. But he that fouls
A virgin soul and leaves it to corrupt,
Would strain God's mercy to the snapping-point,
If it were not far-reaching as Himself.
You must amend this injury.

LORENZO.— Show me how,
And quickly will I do it.

SAVONAROLA.— 'Tis enough.
Let restitution be in full ordained;
And, if you live, each victim ferret out
And wed her to the cloister.

LORENZO.— Doing this,
May I the Almighty Arbiter confront,
And reckon on indulgence?

SAVONAROLA.— Naught that is,
Mountain, nor sea, nor the vast atmosphere,
Nor even man's stupendous scope of sin,
Can get beyond the circumambient range

Of Divine mercy. But before my hands
May absolution shower upon your soul,
Three things there are first indispensable.
LORENZO.—What may these be?
SAVONAROLA.— Firstly, that you should have
Faith in God's mercy, living faith and full.
LORENZO.—And that I have; for if I had it not,
How ill-caparisoned were I to start
Upon this final journey!
SAVONAROLA.— Next, that you
Make reparation absolute, and lay
This as a prior legacy on your sons,
For lingering wrong to friend or enemy.
To this you pawn your soul?
LORENZO.— My soul be bond,
And forfeit if I fail!
SAVONAROLA.— Lastly, Lorenzo,
But mainly this of all, you must restore
Her liberties to Florence.
LORENZO (*starting forward on the couch.*)—Friar, hold!
You overstep your territory there,
And make a raid on my dominions.
Remember what is Cæsar's.
SAVONAROLA.— Do I fail?
Where did you get your empire? Who was it gave
The Medici on Florence that sly grip
Which you have tightened? Nay, invoke not God!
For he as Cæsar ne'er anointed you;
And, failing His anointment, show me then
The sanction of His people.
LORENZO.— What I have,
They freely gave.
SAVONAROLA.— They were not free to give;

For you with splendor first corrupted them,
Drugging their love of virtue, that you might
Their love of freedom violate, and they
The detriment discern not.

LORENZO.— I gave all,
All that I have, all I inherited,
To vivify this city, and to lift
Her diadem of glory high above
All cities, kingdoms, principalities,
Lavished the substance of my House on her,
Discriminating not which hers, which mine,
And die with empty coffers that enriched
The fame of Florence. Was it crime in me?
In face of heavenly ermine will I claim,
For that, exemption.

SAVONAROLA.— Pandars might as well
Plead the foul price they pay, as you invoke
The substance squandered on the Commonwealth,
Whose freedom you have ravished. Well you know
In Florence that the government of One
Was an abomination till your Line
Drew all the reins of rule into its hand,
And jingling trappings of subjection laid
Upon a pampered people. Glory! Fame!
Fame is but sound; conscience makes harmony;
And happy he who truthfully can say,
When the world's pagan plaudits cease, he heard
The sacred music of a virtuous heart.
Give Florence back her freedom!

LORENZO.— She *is* free,
And of her freedom made me what I am,
And by that freedom will unmake my sons
If they run short of wisdom.

SAVONAROLA.— Then enough!
And summon your attendants. (LORENZO *rings. His friends enter.*) You have need
No more of me. But this, Lorenzo, mark!
What you refuse, that Florence swift will take,
When your magnificence shall lie entombed,
And God arraign you for the rights you filched,
But could not carry with you, nor bequeath.
Die, by my voice unshriven! (*His friends crowd round him.* SAVONAROLA *turns to depart, but pauses, and gazes at* LORENZO *with a look of austere menace. Curtain falls.*)

TITO'S ARMOR.

Adapted from George Eliot's novel, "Romola."

CHARACTER.

Tito Melema, *a handsome young man of dark complexion, of keen mind and gentle manners.*

Baldassarre, *his father, a powerfully built old man, whose strength and power have been shattered by disease.*

Piero di Cosimo, *a great painter, gruff but sympathetic, and very keen.*

Romola, *wife of* TITO, *beautiful and intelligent.*

Situation.—TITO *is a deceiver. He has left his father to die in slavery and the jewels given him to purchase the old man's freedom have been sold for his own enrichment. Suddenly the old man appears in front of the San Marco Duomo in Florence and seizes* TITO, *who is so terrified from his consciousness of guilt that he declares the man mad.* PIERO DI COSIMO *catches the situation and paints on canvas, in his studio, the two faces.* TITO *in his fear buys chain armor and puts it on under his tunic.*

TITO *fears that* ROMOLA *knows more about* BALDASSARRE *than he wishes. She fears to ask him; she fears to ask* PIERO *more than a general question.*

These scenes are supposed to take place in Florence, during the last days of the life of SAVONAROLA, *at the close of the fifteenth century.*

Scene I.

ROMOLA *is sitting in the library at the opposite end of which is a wood fire. She hears the outer door close and hastens to greet* TITO *at the library door. Enter* TITO.

ROMOLA.—My Tito, you are tired; it has been a fatiguing day: is it not true? (*She takes off his mantle and carries it away.*)

TITO (*he pays little attention to what she says, sits down in a chair placed for him near the fire, tosses his cap into the corner*).—Romola (*he shudders slightly*) I wish you would give up sitting in this library. Surely our own rooms are pleasanter in this chill weather.

ROMOLA.—I wonder you have forgotten, Tito. You know I am making the catalogue on the new plan that my father wished for; you have not time to help me, so I must work at it closely.

TITO (*he closes his eyes, rubs his hands over his face and hair*).—I am not well, Romola; you must not be surprised if I am peevish.

ROMOLA.—Ah, you have had so much to tire you to-day. (*She kneels down close to him and lays one arm on his chest while she puts his hair back caressingly with the other. Suddenly she draws her arm away with a look of alarmed inquiry*). What have you got on under your tunic, Tito? Something as hard as iron.

TITO (*quietly*).—It *is* iron—it is chain armor.

ROMOLA.—There was some unexpected danger to-day, then? You had it lent to you for the procession?

TITO.—No; it is my own. I shall be obliged to wear it constantly for some time.

ROMOLA (*looking terrified*).—What is it threatens you, my Tito?

TITO.—Every one is threatened in these times. Don't look distressed, my Romola; this armor will make me safe against covert attacks.

ROMOLA.—But, Tito, is it a fear of some particular person, or only a vague sense of danger that has made you think of wearing this?

TITO.—I have had special threats, but I must beg you to be silent on this subject, Romola. I shall consider that you have broken my confidence if you mention it.

ROMOLA.—Assuredly I will not mention it, if you wish it to be a secret. But dearest Tito, it will make you very wretched.

TITO (*with a little alarm lest she know more than she should*).—What will make me wretched?

ROMOLA.—This fear—this heavy armor. I can't help shuddering as I feel it under my arm. It seems so unlike my bright, light-hearted Tito.

TITO.—Then you would rather have your husband exposed to danger when he leaves you? (*He smiles.*) If you don't mind my being poniarded or shot, why need I mind? I wlll give up the armor; shall I?

ROMOLA.—No, no, Tito. I am fanciful. Do not heed what I have said. But is there no more hope that things will end peaceably, for Florence?

TITO (*with a shrug*).—Florence will have no peace but what it pays well for; that is clear.

ROMOLA (*she remains sad a moment and then brightens*).—You would not guess where I went to-day, Tito. I went to the Duomo to hear Fra Girolamo. (*Tito starts.*) You are surprised, are you not? It was a sudden thought: I want to know all about the public affairs now.

TITO.—Well, and what did you think of the prophet?

ROMOLA.—He certainly has a very mysterious power,

that man. A great deal of his sermon was what I expected; but once I sobbed with the rest.

TITO (*playfully*).—Take care, Romola; you have a touch of fanaticism in you. I shall have you seeing visions.

ROMOLA.—No; it was the same with every one else. He carried them all with him. There was even a wretched looking man, with a rope round his neck—an escaped prisoner, I should think, who had run in for shelter—a very wild-eyed old man: I saw him with great tears rolling down his cheeks as he looked and listened quite eagerly.

TITO (*pausing to collect himself*).—I saw the man, the prisoner. I was outside the Duomo with Lorenzo when he ran in. He had escaped from a French soldier. Did you see him when you came out?

ROMOLA.—No, he went out with our good old Piero di Cosimo. I saw Piero come in and cut off his rope, and take him out of the church.—(*Tito's horror overcomes him.*) But you want rest, Tito? You feel ill?

TITO (*rising with a look of sickening fear*).—Yes. (*He goes off. She follows but turns back with a look of terrible doubt*).

Scene II.

A portrait-painter's studio,—pictures about in all stages of completion, but near the entrance two pictures lean against the side-wall, the larger concealing the smaller. The floor is somewhat littered with bits of wood, &c. Enter PIERO *with skull-cap on. He goes to a canvas on opposite side of room and works on it. A knock, and enter* ROMOLA *in street costume, with a small basket in her hand.*

PIERO.—Ah! Madonna Romola, is it you! I thought my eggs were come. I wanted them.

ROMOLA.—I have brought you something better than hard eggs, Piero. I have a little basket full of cakes and *confetti* for you. (*She puts back her veil and then uncovers the basket.*) I know you like these things when you can have them without trouble. Confess you do.

PIERO (*folding his arms and looking down at the basket*).—Yes, when they come to me as easily as the light does.—But I know what the sweetmeats are for; they are to stop my mouth while you scold me. Well, you will see I have done something to your father's picture since you saw it, though it's not finished yet. But I didn't promise, you know; I take care not to promise. (*He crosses the room, takes up the large picture from before the small one and carries it back, scrutinizing it carefully, to the easel at which he was working*).

ROMOLA (*staring in astonishment at the small picture which Piero has just uncovered unintentionally*).—That is Tito! (*Piero looks round and shrugs his shoulders regretfully.*) What a strange picture! When did you paint it? What does it mean? (*Aside.*) Is Tito afraid of that old man? Is that why he wears armor?

PIERO (*pulling off his skull-cap and scratching his head to conceal his vexation at his blunder*).—A mere fancy of mine. I wanted a handsome face for it and your husband's was just the thing. (*He picks up the picture back to Romola to put it out of sight*).

ROMOLA.—Don't put it away; let me look again. That man with the rope around his neck—I saw him—I saw you come to him in the Duomo. What was it that made you put him into a picture with Tito?

PIERO.—It was a mere accident. The man was running away—running up the steps, and caught hold of your husband. I happened to be there and saw it, and I thought

the savage-looking old fellow was a good subject. But it's worth nothing—it's only a freakish daub of mine. (*He casts the bit of canvas away on some high shelf.*) Come and look at your father.

ROMOLA.—He was a strange piteous-looking man, that prisoner. Do you know anything more of him?

PIERO.—No more; I showed him the way to the hospital, that's all. (*He points to the portrait of her father.*) See, now, the face is pretty nearly finished; tell me what you think of it.

ROMOLA (*after gazing in silence some moments*).—Ah! you have done what I wanted. You have given it more of the listening look. My dear Piero, I am very grateful to you.

PIERO (*kicking impatiently objects littering the floor*).—Now, that's what I can't bear in you women, you're always pouring out feelings where there's no call for them. If I paint a picture, I suppose it's for my own pleasure and credit to paint them well, eh? But women think walls are held together with honey.

ROMOLA.—You crusty Piero! I forgot how snappish you are. Here, put this nice sweetmeat in your mouth. (*She takes one out of her basket.*)

PIERO.—It's good, Madonna Romola. (*He puts in his fingers for another.*)

ROMOLA (*she sets down the basket and puts on her veil*).—Good-bye, Piero. I promise not to thank you if you finish the portrait soon and well. I will tell you, you were bound to do it for your own credit.

PIERO.—Good. (*He helps her with her mantle and she goes out.*)

Scene III.

A miserable hovel with straw in one corner. BALDASSARRE *enters distractedly and sits on a low stool a little to one side.*

BALDASSARRE (*putting his hand to his head*).—It is gone —it is all gone! And they would not believe me, because he lied, and said I was mad, and dragged me away. And I am old—(*Again he puts his hand to his head.*) My mind will not come back.—And the world is against me. (*A pause.*) He made me love him, he was beautiful and gentle, and I was a lonely man. They were beating me when I took him. He slept in my bosom when he was little, and I watched him grow, and gave him all my knowledge, and everything that was mine, I meant to be his. I had many things, money and books and gems. He had my gems—he sold them; and he left me in slavery. He never came to seek me and now that I am come back poor and in misery, he denies me. He said I was a madman—(*Another pause.*) Oh if I could only find all my thoughts again! *I was* locked away outside them all. And I am outside now. I feel nothing but a wall and darkness—— It all came back once. I was master of everything, I saw all the world again and my gems, and my books; and I thought I had him in my power, and I went to expose him where—where the lights were and the trees; and he lied again and said I was mad, and they dragged me away to prison——Wickedness is strong; the world is against me: but there is a fire within (*he clutches his dagger*) and it is the fire that works. I am not alone in the world; I shall never be alone, for my revenge is with me.—(*He half rises with his dagger in his hand.*) If I might clutch his heart-strings forever! Come, O blessed promise! Let my

blood flow; let the fire consume me!—(*The old man sinks back and there is silence.*)

TITO *enters after making some noise in opening the door,* BALDASSARRE *staggers up and lunges at* TITO *with his dagger. It snaps against the armor and* BALDASSARRE *falls down and back slowly, with a look of intense hate.*

TITO (*after a pause, in a calm, insinuating voice*).—Padre mio!—I came to ask your forgiveness. (*Another pause. Baldassarre lies on the straw, trembling and leaning on one arm.*) I was taken by surprise that morning. I wish now to be a son to you again. I wish to make the rest of your life happy, that you may forget what you have suffered.

BALDASSARRE (*He throws away his dagger and slowly, still trembling, begins to rise. Tito puts out his hand, Baldassarre clutches it, raises himself and still holding the hand, speaks close into Tito's face*).—I saved you—I nurtured you—I loved you. You forsook me—you robbed me—you denied me. What can you give me? You have made the world bitterness to me; but there is one draught of sweetness left—that you shall know agony. (*He drops Tito's hand and goes backward catching himself as he sinks down again on the straw exhausted.*)

TITO. (*after a pause, calmly*).—Do you mean to stay here?

BALDASSARRE (*bitterly*).—No, you mean to turn me out.

TITO.—Not so, I only asked.

BALDASSARRE.—I tell you, you have turned me out. If it is your straw, you turned me off it three years ago.

TITO.—Then you mean to leave this place?

BALDASSARRE.—I have spoken. (*Tito turns to leave but*

stops to hear Baldassarre who begins to speak as if his mind had wandered.) I was a loving fool—I worshipped a woman once, and believed she would care for me. And then I took a helpless child and fostered him ; and I watched him as he grew to see if he would care for me only a little—care for me over and above the good he got from me. I would have torn open my breast to warm him with my life blood, if I could only have seen him care a little for the pain of my wound. I have labored, I have strained to crush out of this hard life one drop of unselfish love. Fool ! And yet when he was a child he lifted soft eyes toward me and held my hand ; I thought this boy will surely love me a little ; because I give my life to him and strive that he shall know no sorrow, he will care a little when I am thirsty—the drops he lays on my parched lips will be a joy to him.—(*He turns and sees Tito still standing by the door and listening. He struggles to his feet.*) Curses on you ! May I see you lie with those red lips white and dry as ashes. It is all a lie—this world is a lie—there is no goodness but in hate ! Fool ! Not one drop of love has come with all my striving. But there are deep draughts in this world for hatred and revenge. I have memory for that, and there is strength in my arm (*he totters towards Tito*)—there is strength in my will—and if I can do nothing but kill you (*he clutches Tito's arm and glares into his face*)—There is a moment after the thrust when men see the face of death—and it shall be *my* face that you shall see. (*As these last words are uttered, Tito retires slowly followed by the old man still clutching him until they go out.*)

LOVE CONQUERS REVENGE.

Adapted from "The Cipher Despatch," by Robert Byr.

CHARACTERS.

Bertram Karst, *a young man grown old and almost insane by brooding on the wrongs done him.*

Weddo, *a large, powerfully-built man, husband of* GRACE.

Mrs. Karst, *mother of* BERTRAM.

Grace, (*whom* BERTRAM *calls* GRAZIELLA), *daughter of a former Prime Minister.*

Situation.—BERTRAM, *at one time accepted by* GRACE *as a lover, has sworn vengeance on her father for giving her to* WEDDO. *His rejection, however, was due to his father's implied connection with a secret act of public treason. The real traitor is at last found to be the son of the Prime Minister. This fact is published and* BERTRAM *seeks to win* GRACE *again, but she refuses to get a divorce. He then in revenge plans an elopement with a lady under* GRACE'S *protection. He is expecting this lady when the scene opens.*

The room in which the scene takes place is very bare. There is a table and a chair or two,—one chair near the table.

BERTRAM *enters with his overcoat on his arm, and approaches the table. He draws from his pocket a pistol which he looks at carefully, then he lays it on the table, and throws his coat over it. He is expecting some one, looks at his watch, goes to the door to listen. At last, as he is with his back toward the door, he hears some one coming. He turns and takes a step to receive her in his arms, but starts back at the discovery that* GRACE *and not* ADELE, *has come.*

BERTRAM (*staring in amazement, a moment*).—Graziella! (*She has been running and cannot yet speak.*) What brings you here?

GRACE.—Did you not expect one of the inmates of the castle?

BERTRAM.—But not——

GRACE.—Not me—finish.

BERTRAM (*gloomily*).—You seem to be fully initiated in my plans.

GRACE (*nodding gravely*).—I think so, even to your last intentions.

BERTRAM (*impetuously*).—And through whom? Through whom? Not through her! She cannot have become irresolute. Who betrayed me?

GRACE (*after a moment's hesitation*).—Her maid has confessed all that she knows. I won her.

BERTRAM.—So you spy upon others, and reward treachery.

GRACE.—Why should I hesitate to do so when the honor and peace of my family, the happiness, and perhaps the life of my father, are involved?

BERTRAM (*stamps his foot angrily*).—Your calculations have failed. Your greatest care will not prevent me from doing what I have resolved upon. Instead of to-day, to-morrow; that is all the difference. I will go at once to

the castle and force my way in to her. Why need it be a secret elopement?

GRACE.—You will not do that.

BERTRAM.—Who will prevent me?

GRACE.—I.

BERTRAM (*fiercely*).—And do you think you will frustrate me? (*He comes close up to her, then grasps her arm.*) Do you know that you are in my power?

GRACE.—You will not do so.

BERTRAM.—And why not? Do you feel so safe? You came here yourself, and am I to let you go? I have had you in my power once already. Now you shall be mine forever—my slave! You venture into a wolf's den, oh, clever lamb; why should I not devour you?

GRACE (*shaking from head to foot, but gazing at him*).—Because you loved me—or was that, too, a lie?

BERTRAM (*letting his hand fall from her arm*).—You appealed to that at a wrong time.

GRACE (*gently*).—How could a man injure one whom, even in times long past, he has truly loved?

BERTRAM.—How do you know that? From your own experience?

GRACE.—Yes. The feeling that one would fain bless another's life can never become extinct, whatever may afterward happen. If you loved me——

BERTRAM (*bitterly*).—You still doubt it?

GRACE.—No, Bertram. You are not naturally evil, and all that you do in moments of passion will fall back upon yourself. No; I know better than you do, that because you once loved me you can do me no harm; but all that you do to my family falls upon me, each blow wounds me. And if you wish to inflict misery and grief upon me, have I not suffered enough?

BERTRAM (*gloomily*).—Have you asked what I suffer?

GRACE.—If a balance is to be struck, I think your scale hangs far the lowest. You are terribly avenged. Could you see my poor father, your thirst for revenge would be satisfied,—the minister ruined and in his voluntary exile, and with him his whole family. In truth, I should have fancied that your hand would have been disarmed by such a monstrous price.

BERTRAM.—You did not believe that this publicity was my fault!

GRACE (*gazing silently at him for some time*).—No, no, I did not believe it, and told the others so. I was not deceived when I counted on your pride. It will also prevent you in future from again attempting what is beneath your dignity. (*She holds out her hand to him.*)

BERTRAM (*hesitating*).—Why did you come? You could have written me all this, and I should have been spared seeing you.

GRACE (*approaching and laying her hand gently on his arm*).—Because I wished to tell you this, Bertram, and because I knew that you would listen to me. It is not your nature to hate. Your heart was poisoned. You must be again what you once were. I saw that you suffered and I pitied you. I saw you working your own ruin, and I hoped I could prevent it.

BERTRAM.—Yes, yes; they all said so! The madman who destroys his own life, who raises his hand against himself. Go then! You have taken away the object of my life; it is well.

GRACE (*with deep emotion*).—Bertram!

BERTRAM (*covering his eyes and groaning*).—Yes, yes; the world is as empty as my heart. The fires of life are burned out; nothing is left but ashes. All is over; all!

Go! Go! (*While Grace stands beside him, hesitating whether to leave him, the door bursts open and her husband, Weddo, plunges in.*)

WEDDO (*muttering*).—Then it is true! it is true! (*With a great effort at self-control he approaches the table opposite Bertram.*) Why did you not at least bolt the door? Have you so little respect for a woman who forgets herself, that you will not even protect her from a surprise and humiliation? Or do you feel so secure from me that you neglect the simplest precaution? The insult is then a double one.

BERTRAM (*rising, still feeling desolate, and not understanding Weddo's speech*).—What do you want here? I have nothing to do with you.

WEDDO (*in angry surprise*).—Indeed, I think you have! You will not refuse to give me satisfaction.

BERTRAM.—I give you? I think rather that I am called upon to demand such.

GRACE.—What are you thinking of, Weddo? Is it possible that a low suspicion—— (*His intense gaze stops her.*)

WEDDO.—No more words are needed, the facts speak plainly enough. If you fancied me blind and deaf, I was not. I have had too much confidence in her whom I made my wife, although I knew she did not love me, and yet I hoped she would learn to forget and after a time a warmer feeling might be awakened. But another pair of eyes sharpened by ill-will and distrust, saw for me and they saw rightly, as I have here proof. Old Hanuschka told me that on the night of the hunt-dinner a man was in your rooms. I was too proud to allude, even by a word, to my knowledge of it. I did indeed learn my mistake as day after day passed without your speaking. I should have acted more wisely for my own and my honor's sake, if I

had sought out this man and killed him before he had persuaded his old mother to act as go-between, and sent her to you to arrange this interview.

BERTRAM (*who has been growing more and more excited*).—Senseless man! You revile innocence and goodness. I did not call her; she came herself, and what she did was no insult to the honor of your house, but its protection. Without her, yet more disgrace would have befallen your family, and I should be revenged. (*Weddo looks from one to the other.*)

GRACE (*holding out her hand, pleadingly*).—Oh, believe him, Weddo!

WEDDO.—And in order to avert disgrace do you plunge in it over your head?

BERTRAM (*furiously*).—Whoever treats his wife thus does not deserve her. And why should I leave you here? Her heart belonged to me; it shall continue mine. What prevents me from killing you as you spoke of killing me? You reproached yourself for not taking your rights before. I will not make this mistake. I take only what is mine. (*With flashing eye he reaches for the pistol under his coat on the table.*)

WEDDO (*with a defiant glance and a scornful tone*).—It would be no novelty if a housebreaker, seducer, and thief were to become a murderer also. Only you cannot drive *me* to suicide. Your own hand must complete the work this time.

BERTRAM (*cocking his pistol*).—Then be accursed!

GRACE.—Ah! (*With a wild scream throwing herself upon her husband.*) Have pity! I love him! (*Bertram wavers, his hand shakes, he drops the pistol, sinks into a chair and his head falls forward into his hands.*)

WEDDO (*to Grace*).—If he had hit you! Merciful God!

GRACE.—O Weddo, I will live and die with you!

WEDDO.—Grace! (*Weddo and Grace go out.*)

BERTRAM (*remains in the same position, only uttering an occasional groan, until his mother quietly entering lays her hand on his shoulder. He then raises his head slowly.*)—Mother! (*The two are clasped in each other's arms and their sobs mingled.*)

CURTAIN.

BECKET SAVES ROSAMUND.

This scene is adapted from "Becket," by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

CHARACTERS.

Thomas Becket, *Archbishop of Canterbury, tall, powerful, and commanding.*

Sir Reginald Fitzurse, *a Knight of the King's household and an enemy of Becket.*

Geoffrey, *the young son of the King and* ROSAMUND.

Eleanor, *Queen of England.*

Rosamund de Clifford, *secret mistress of the King, of great beauty and innocence.*

Situation.—ROSAMUND *believes that she is the only truly wedded wife of Henry II., who has hid her and her beautiful boy in a secret bower in a forest of England. Henry is away from England, and the Queen with* FITZURSE *has discovered the location of the "Bower." Just before the scene here given* ROSAMUND *suspects that there is a Queen. Her keeper has become drunken and careless, and* GEOFFREY'S *nurse untrustworthy.* BECKET *has been given charge of the "Bower" during Henry's absence, and towards the end of the scene arrives just in time to prevent a murder. He is a very powerful man.*

ELEANOR *should have a disagreeable look and carry about her person some vials of poison and a dagger.*

Enter ROSAMUND, *much disturbed.*

ROSAMUND.—The boy so late; pray God, he be not lost.
I sent this Margery, and she comes not back;
I sent another, and she comes not back;
I go myself—so many alleys, crossings,
Paths, avenues—nay, if I lost him, now
The folds have fallen from the mystery,
And left all naked, I were lost indeed.

Enter GEOFFREY *and* ELEANOR, *a little distance behind him.*

Geoffrey, the pain thou has put me to! (*she sees Eleanor*)
—Ha, you!
How came you hither?

ELEANOR.— Your own child brought me hither.

GEOFFREY.—You said you couldn't trust Margery, and I watched her and followed her into the woods, and I lost her, and went on and on till I found the light and the lady, and she says she can make you sleep o' nights.

ROSAMUND (*to Eleanor*).—How dared you? Know you not this bower is secret,
Of and belonging to the King of England,
More sacred than his forests for the chase?
Nay, nay, Heaven help you; get you hence in haste
Lest worse befall you.

ELEANOR.— Child, I am mine own self
Of and belonging to the King. The King
Hath divers ofs and ons, ofs and belongings,
Almost as many as your true Mussulman——
Belongings, paramours, whom it pleases him
To call his wives; but so it chances, child,
That I am his main paramour, his sultana,
But since the fondest pair of doves will jar,
Ev'n in a cage of gold, we had words of late,

And thereupon he called my children bastards
Do you believe that you are married to him?

ROSAMUND.—I *should* believe it.

ELEANOR.— You must not believe it,
Because I have a wholesome medicine here
Puts that belief asleep. Your answer, beauty!
Do you believe that you are married to him?

ROSAMUND.—Geoffrey, my boy, I saw the ball you lost in the fork of the great willow over the brook. Go. See that you do not fall in. Go.

GEOFFREY.—And leave you alone with the good fairy. She calls you beauty, but I don't like her looks.

ROSAMUND.—Go. (*He goes out.*)

ELEANOR.—He is easily found again. *Do* you believe it?
I pray you then to take my sleeping-draught;
But if you should not care to take it—see! (*She draws a dagger.*)
What! have I scared the red rose from your face
Into your heart. But this will find it there,
And dig it from the root for ever.

ROSAMUND (*she has shrunk back at sight of the dagger*).—Help! Help!

ELEANOR.—They say that walls have ears; but these, it seems,
Have none! and I have none—to pity thee.

ROSAMUND.—I do beseech you—my child is so young.
I am not so happy I could not die myself,
But the child is so young. You have children—his;
And mine is the King's child; so, if you love him——
Nay, if you love him, there is a great wrong done
Somehow; but if you do not—there are those
Who say you do not love him—let me go
With my young boy, and God will be our guide,

And I will beg my bread along the world.
I never meant you harm in any way.
See, I can say no more.

ELEANOR.—Will you not say you are not married to him?

ROSAMUND.—Ay, madam, I can *say* it, if you will.

ELEANOR.—Then is thy pretty boy a bastard?

ROSAMUND.— No.

ELEANOR.—And thou thyself a proven wanton?

ROSAMUND.— No.

I am none such. I never loved but one.
I have heard of such that range from love to love,
Like the wild beast—if you can call it love.
I have heard of such—yea, even among those
Who sit on thrones—I never saw any such,
Never knew any such, and howsoever
You do misname me, match'd with any such,
I am snow to mud.

ELEANOR.— The more the pity then
That thy true home—the heavens—cry out for thee
Who art too pure for earth.

Enter FITZURSE.

FITZURSE.— Give her to me.

ELEANOR.—The Judas-lover of our passion-play
Hath tracked us hither.

FITZURSE.—Well, why not? I follow'd
You and the child; he babbled all the way.
Give her to me to make my honeymoon.

ELEANOR.— No!
I follow out my hate and thy revenge.

FITZURSE.—You bade me take revenge another way—
To bring her to the dust——Come with me, love,
And I will love thee——Madam, let her live.
I have a far-off burrow where the King

Would miss her and for ever.

ROSAMUND.—Give me the poison; set me free of him!

(*Eleanor offers the vial.*)

No, no! I will not have it.

ELEANOR.— Then this other,
The wiser choice, because my sleeping-draught
May bloat thy beauty out of shape, and make
Thy body loathsome, even to thy child;
While this but leaves thee with a broken heart,
A doll-face blanched and bloodless, over which
If pretty Godfrey do not break his own,
It must be broken for him.

ROSAMUND.— Oh, I see now
Your purpose is to fright me—a troubadour
You play with words. You had never used so many,
Not if you meant it, I am sure. The child——
No——mercy! No! (*She kneels.*)

ELEANOR.— Play!——that bosom never
Heaved under the King's hand with such true passion
As at this loveless knife that stirs the riot,
Which it will quench in blood!—Fitzurse,
The running down the chase is kindlier sport
Ev'n than the death. (*To Rosamund*) Take thy one chance;
Catch at the last straw. Kneel to thy lord Fitzurse;
Crouch even because thou hatest him; fawn upon him
For thy life and thy son's.

ROSAMUND (*rising*).—I am a Clifford,
My son a Clifford and Plantagenet.
I am to die then, tho' there stands beside thee
One who might grapple with thy dagger, if he
Had aught of man, or thou of woman; or I
Would bow to such a baseness as would make me
Most worthy of it; both of us will die,

Strike!
I challenge thee to meet me before God.
Answer me there.

ELEANOR (*she raises the dagger*).—This in thy bosom, fool
And after in thy——

Enter BECKET *from behind.*

BECKET (*he seizes her raised arm*).—Murderess! (*The dagger falls; they stare at one another, but he does not release her.*)

ELEANOR (*after a pause*).—My, lord, we know you proud
of your fine hand,
But having now admired it long enough,
We find that it is mightier than it seems——
At least mine own is frailer; you are laming it.

BECKET.—And lamed and maimed to dislocation, better
Than raised to take a life which Henry bade me
Guard from the stroke that dooms thee after death
To wail in deathless flame.

ELEANOR.—My lord Fitzurse——

BECKET (*he drops her arm and discovers him*).—He too!
what dost thou here?
Go, lest I blast thee with anathema
And make a world's horror.

FITZURSE.— My lord, I shall
Remember this.

BECKET.—I *do* remember thee. (*Fitzurse goes out.*)——
(*To Eleanor*) Take up your dagger; put it in the sheath.

ELEANOR.—Might not your courtesy stoop to hand it
me? (*She wilts under his piercing glance.*)
But crowns must bow when mitres sit so high.
Well—well—too costly to be left or lost. (*She picks up the dagger with a look of great scorn toward Becket.*)

BECKET (*after watching in silence the picking up of the dagger, turns to Rosamund*).—Daughter, the world hath trick'd thee. Leave it, daughter. (*He speaks gently.*)
Come thou with me to Godstow nunnery,
And live what may be left thee of a life
Saved as by miracle, alone with Him
Who gave it. (*He leads Rosamund out. Eleanor waits till they have disappeared, looks all round disdainfully and goes out.*)

THE PRINCESS AND THE COUNTESS.

Adapted from "Prince Otto," by Robert Louis Stevenson.

CHARACTERS.

Princess Seraphina, *Queen of Grunewald.*

Countess Anna von Rosen, *an intriguing lady of the Court, who has a true regard for the King, Prince Otto.*

Situation.—Baron Heinrich Gondremark, *in the absence of the Prince, has obtained control of affairs of the kingdom through the Princess, and stirs up a rebellion. On the Prince's return, he persuades the Princess to write an order to imprison the Prince.* Countess Anna *has shown this order to the Prince, who has willingly submitted, and then she has carried it to the authorities for execution. She returns to the Princess to stir up a proper love for the Prince and to get an order for his release.*

The Princess *sits alone at her table, troubled by conscience, out of health, out of heart. Enter* Countess.

Princess.—You come, madam, from the Baron? Be seated. What have you to say?

Countess.—To say? Oh, much to say! Well! to be categorical—that is the word?—I took the Prince your

order. He could not credit his senses. "Ah," he cried, "dear Madame von Rosen, it is not possible—it cannot be—I must hear it from your lips. My wife is a poor girl misled, she is only silly, she is not cruel." "*Mon Prince*," said I, "a girl—and therefore cruel; youth kills flies."—He had such pain to understand it!

PRINCESS (*a little angry*).—Madame von Rosen, who sent you here, and for what purpose? Tell your errand.

COUNTESS.—O madam, I believe you understand me very well. I have not your philosophy. I wear my heart upon my sleeve, excuse the indecency! It is a very little one (*she laughs*), and I so often change the sleeve.

PRINCESS (*rising*).—Am I to understand the Prince has been arrested?

COUNTESS (*quite nonchalant*).—While you sat there dining!

PRINCESS.—You have discharged your errand; I will not detain you.

COUNTESS.—O no, madam, with your permission, I have not yet done. I have borne much this evening in your service. (*She unfolds her fan, to conceal her inward agitation; but waves it very languidly.*)

PRINCESS.—You are no servant, Madame von Rosen, of mine.

COUNTESS.—No, madam, indeed; but we both serve the same person, as you know—or if you do not, then I have the pleasure of informing you. Your conduct is so light—so light (*she waves the fan like a butterfly*), that perhaps you do not truly understand. (*She rolls her fan together and puts it in her lap.*) Indeed, I should be sorry to see any young woman in your situation. You began with every advantage—birth, a suitable marriage—quite pretty, too—and see what you have come to! My poor girl, to think of it!

But there is nothing that does so much harm as giddiness of mind. (*She fans herself again.*)

PRINCESS.—I will no longer permit you to forget yourself. I think you are mad.

COUNTESS.—Not mad. Sane enough to know you dare not break with me to-night, and to profit by the knowledge. I left my poor pretty Prince Charming crying his eyes out for a wooden doll. O, you immature fool! (*She rises to her feet and the closed fan trembles as she points it at the Princess.*) O wooden doll! have you a heart, or blood, or any nature? This is a man, child—a man who loves you. Oh, it will not happen twice! And you, you pitiful schoolgirl, tread this jewel underfoot! you, stupid with your vanity!—I will tell you one of the things that were to stay unspoken. Von Rosen is a better woman than you, my Princess, though you will never have the pain of understanding it; and when I took the Prince your order, and looked upon his face, my soul was melted—Oh, I am frank—here, within my arms, I offered him repose. (*She advances, as she speaks, with outstretched arms, but the Princess shrinks away.*) Do not be alarmed; I am not offering that hermitage to you. In all the world there is but one who wants to, and him you have dismissed! "If it will give her pleasure I should wear the martyr's crown," he cried, "I will embrace the thorns." I tell you—I am quite frank—I put the order in his power and begged him to resist. You, who have betrayed your husband, may betray me to Gondremark; my Prince would betray no one. Understand it plainly, 'tis of his pure forbearance you sit there; he had the power—I gave it to him—to change the parts; and he refused, and went to prison in your place.

PRINCESS (*with some distress*).—Your violence shocks me and pains me, but I cannot be angry with what at least

does honor to the mistaken kindness of your heart; it was right for me to know this. I will condescend to tell you. It was our great misfortune, it was perhaps somewhat of my fault, that we were so unsuited to each other; but I have a regard, a sincere regard, for all his qualities. As a private person I should think as you do. It is difficult, I know, to make allowances for state considerations. I have only with deep reluctance obeyed the call of a superior duty; and so soon as I dare do it for the safety of the state, I promise you the Prince shall be released. Many in my situation would have resented your freedoms. I am not—(*she looks rather piteously upon the Countess*)—I am not altogether so inhuman as you think.

COUNTESS.—And you can put these troubles of the state to weigh with a man's love?

PRINCESS (*with dignity*).—Madame von Rosen, these troubles are affairs of life and death to many; to the Prince, and perhaps even to yourself, among the number. I have learned madam, although still so young, in a hard school, that my own feelings must everywhere come last.

COUNTESS.—O callow innocence! Is it possible you do not know, or do not suspect, the intrigue in which you move? I find it in my heart to pity you! We are both women, after all—poor girl, poor girl!—and who is born a woman is born a fool. And though I hate all women—come, for the common folly, I forgive you. Your Highness (*she drops a deep courtesy and resumes her fan*), I am going to insult you, to betray one who is called my lover, and if it pleases you to use the power I now put unreservedly into your hands, to ruin my dear self. Oh, what a French comedy! You betray, I betray, they betray. It is now my cue. The letter, yes, behold the letter, madam, its seal unbroken as I found it by my bed this morning; for I

was out of humor and I get many, too many, of these favors. For your own sake, for the sake of my Prince Charming, for the sake of this great municipality, that sits so heavy on your conscience, open it and read! (*She holds it to her.*)

PRINCESS.—Am I to understand that this letter in any way regards me?

COUNTESS.—You see I have not opened it; but 'tis mine, and I beg you to experiment.

PRINCESS (*very seriously*).—I cannot look at it till you have. There may be matter there not meant for me to see; it is a private letter. (*The Countess tears it open, glances it through, and tosses it on the table. The Princess takes it up, recognizes the handwriting of Gondremark, and reads with horror.*) "Dearest Anna, come at once. Ratafia has done the deed, her husband to be packed to prison. This puts the minx entirely in my power: the die is cast; she will now go steady in harness, or I will know the reason why. Come. Heinrich." (*The Princess sinks down, almost fainting.*)

COUNTESS.—Command yourself, madam. It is in vain for you to fight with Gondremark; he has more strings than mere court favor, and could bring you down to-morrow with a word. I would not have betrayed him otherwise; but Heinrich is a man, and plays with all of you like marionettes. And now at least you see for what you sacrificed my Prince.—Madam, will you take some wine? I have been cruel.

PRINCESS (*with a faint smile*).—Not cruel, madam—salutary. No, I thank you, I require no attentions. The first surprise affected me; will you give me time a little? I must think. (*She holds her head in her hands and thinks tempestuously.*) This information reaches me when I have need of it. I would not do as you have done, and yet I

thank you. I have been much deceived in Baron Gondremark.

COUNTESS.—Oh, madam, leave Gondremark, and think upon the Prince!

PRINCESS.—You speak once more as a private person, nor do I blame you. But my own thoughts are most distracted. However, as I believe you are truly a friend to my—to the —as I believe you are a friend to Otto, I shall put the order for his release into your hands this moment. Give me the ink. There! (*She writes hastily, steadying her trembling hand on the table.*) Remember, madam (*she hands the order*), this must not be used nor spoken of at present; till I have seen the Baron, any hurried step—I lose myself in thinking. The suddenness has shaken me.

COUNTESS.—I promise you I will not use it till you give me leave, although I wish the Prince could be informed of it, to comfort his poor heart. And, oh, I had forgotten, he has left a letter. Suffer me, madam; I will bring it to you. This is the door, I think? (*She goes to the side opposite her entrance and tries in vain to open the door.*)

PRINCESS.—The bolt is pushed.

COUNTESS.—Oh, Oh!

PRINCESS (*after a silence*).—I will get it for myself, and in the meanwhile I beg you to leave me. I thank you, I am sure, but I shall be obliged if you will withdraw. (*The Countess courtesies and withdraws.*)

CURTAIN.

QUEEN CATHERINE.

CHARACTERS.

Catherine of Arragon, *wife of* HENRY VIII.

Thomas Wolsey, *Cardinal, Prime Minister of* HENRY VIII. *and* DUKE OF YORK.

Campeius, *Cardinal and Legate from the Pope.*

A Gentleman in attendance upon the Queen.

Some Women at work with the Queen.

Situation.—HENRY VIII. *is about to put aside* QUEEN CATHERINE *in order to marry* ANNE BOLEYN. *He sends* CARDINAL WOLSEY *and the Pope's Legate,* CARDINAL CAMPEIUS, *to obtain the Queen's acquiescence. The interview is stormy but successful. The Queen is in her own apartments with her women about her at work on embroidery or something of like nature.*

Enter a GENTLEMAN.

CATHERINE.—How now!

GENTLEMAN.—An't please your Grace, the two great Cardinals
Wait in the presence.*

CATHERINE.— Would they speak with me?

GENTLEMAN.—They willed me say so, madam.

* Presence for *presence-chamber*, or reception room.

CATHERINE.— Pray their Graces
To come near. (*Exit Gentleman.*) What can be their business
With me, a poor weak woman, fall'n from favor?
I do not like their coming, now I think on't.
They should be good men; their affairs are righteous;
But all hoods make not monks.

Enter WOLSEY *and* CAMPEIUS.

WOLSEY.— Peace to your Highness!

CATHERINE.—Your Graces find me here part of a housewife:
I would be all, against the worse may happen.
What are your pleasures with me, reverend lords?

WOLSEY.—May't please you, noble madam, to withdraw
Into your private chamber, we shall give you
The full cause of our coming.

CATHERINE.— Speak it here;
There's nothing I have done yet, o' my conscience,
Deserves a corner: would all other women
Could speak this with as free a soul as I do!
My lords, I care not—so much I am happy
Above a number—if my actions
Were tried by every tongue, every eye saw 'em,
Envy and base opinion set against 'em,
I know my life so even. If your business
Do seek me out and that way I am wife in,
Out with it boldly; truth loves open dealing.

WOLSEY.—*Tanta est erga te mentis integritas, regina serenissima*——

CATHERINE.—Oh, good my lord, no Latin;
I am not such a truant since my coming,
As not to know the language I have lived in;

A strange tongue makes my cause more strange-suspicious.
Pray, speak in English: here are some will thank you,
If you speak truth, for their poor mistress' sake;
Believe me, she has had much wrong: Lord Cardinal,
The willing'st sin I ever yet committed
May be absolved in English.

WOLSEY.— Noble lady,
I'm sorry my integrity should breed
So deep suspicion, where all faith was meant,
And service to his Majesty and you.
We come not by the way of accusation,
To taint that honor every good tongue blesses,
Nor to betray you any way to sorrow;
You have too much, good lady: but to know
How you stand minded in the weighty difference
Between the king and you; and to deliver,
Like free and honest men, our just opinions,
And comforts to your cause.

CAMPEIUS.— Most honor'd madam,
My Lord of York,—out of his noble nature,
Zeal and obedience he still bore your Grace,—
(Forgetting, like a good man, your late censure,
Both of his truth and him, which was too far,)—
Offers, as I do, in a sign of peace, (*crosses himself.*)
His service and his counsel.

CATHERINE (*aside*).— To betray me.—
My lords, I thank you both for your good wills:
Ye speak like honest men; pray God, ye prove so!
But how to make ye suddenly an answer,
In such a point of weight, so near mine honor,—
More near my life, I fear,—with my weak wit,
And to such men of gravity and learning,
In truth, I know not. I was set at work

Among my maids; full little, God knows, looking
Either for such men or such business.
Let me have time and counsel for my cause:
Alas, I am a woman, friendless, hopeless.

WOLSEY.—Madam, you wrong the king's love with these fears;
Your hopes and friends are infinite.

CATHERINE.— In England
But little for my profit: can you think, lords,
That any Englishman dare give me counsel?
Or be a known friend, 'gainst his Highness' pleasure,
Though he be grown so desperate to be honest,—
And live a subject? Nay, forsooth, my friends,
They that must weigh * out my afflictions,
They that my trust must grow to, live not here—
They are, as all my other comforts, far hence,
In mine own country, lords.

CAMPEIUS.— I would your Grace
Would leave your griefs, and take my counsel.

CATHERINE.— How, sir?

CAMPEIUS.—Put your main cause into the king's protection;
He's loving and most gracious; 'twill be much
Both for your honor better and your cause;
For if the trial of the law o'ertake ye,
You'll part away disgraced.

WOLSEY.— He tells you rightly.

CATHERINE.—Ye tell me what ye wish for both, my ruin:
Is this your Christian counsel? Out upon ye!
Heaven is above all yet; there sits a judge
That no king can corrupt.

* *Weigh out*, that is, *consider* my afflictions.

CAMPEIUS.— Your rage mistakes us.

CATHERINE.— The more shame for ye: holy men I thought ye,
Upon my soul, two reverend cardinal virtues;
But cardinal sins and hollow hearts, I fear ye:
Mend 'em, for shame, my lords. Is this your comfort?
The cordial that ye bring a wretched lady,
A woman lost among ye, laugh'd at, scorn'd?
I will not wish ye half my miseries;
I have more charity: but say, I warn'd ye;
Take heed, for Heaven's sake, take heed, lest at once
The burden of my sorrows fall upon ye.

WOLSEY.—Madam, this is a mere distraction;
You turn the good we offer into envy.*

CATHERINE.—Ye turn me into nothing: woe upon ye,
And all such false professors!
Have I lived thus long (let me speak myself,
Since virtue finds no friends) a wife, a true one?
A woman—I dare say, without vain glory—
Never yet branded with suspicion?
Bring me a constant woman to her husband,
One that ne'er dream'd a joy beyond his pleasure;
And to that woman, when she has done most,
Yet will I add an honor,—a great patience.

WOLSEY.—Madam, you wander from the good we aim at.

CATHERINE.—My lord, I dare not make myself so guilty,
To give up willingly that noble title
Your master wed me to: nothing but death
Shall e'er divorce my dignities.

WOLSEY (*tries to interrupt her*).—Pray, hear me——

CATHERINE.—Would I had never trod this English earth,

* *Envy*, for *malice*.

Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it!
Ye've angels' faces, but Heaven knows your hearts.
What will become of me now, wretched lady!
I am the most unhappy woman living.—(*She turns to her women and kisses them fondly.*)
Alas, poor wenches, where are now your fortunes?
Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
No friends, no hope; no kindred weep for me;
Almost no grave allow'd me: like the lily,
That once was mistress of the field and flourish'd,
I'll hang my head and perish.

WOLSEY.— If your Grace
Could but be brought to know our ends are honest,
You'd feel more comfort. Why should we, good lady,
Upon what cause, wrong you? Alas, our places,
The way of our profession is against it:
We are to cure such sorrows, not to sow 'em.
For goodness' sake, consider what you do;
How you may hurt yourself, ay, utterly
Grow from the king's acquaintance, by this carriage.
The hearts of princes kiss obedience,
So much they love it; but to stubborn spirits
They swell, and grow as terrible as storms.
I know you have a gentle, noble temper,
A soul as even as a calm: pray, think us
Those we profess, peace-makers, friends, and servants.

CAMPEIUS.—Madam, you'll find it so. You wrong your virtues
With these weak women's fears: a noble spirit
As yours was put into you, ever casts
Such doubts, as false coin, from it. The king loves you;
Beware you lose it not: for us, if please you,
To trust us in your business, we are ready

To use our utmost studies in your service.

CATHERINE.—Do what ye will, my lords: and, pray, forgive me,
If I have used myself unmannerly;
You know I am a woman, lacking wit
To make a seemly answer to such persons.
Pray, do my service to his Majesty:
He has my heart yet; and shall have my prayers
While I shall have my life. Come, reverend fathers,
Bestow your counsels on me: she now begs,
That little thought, when she set footing here,
She should have bought her dignities so dear. (*The Queen goes out, followed by the two Cardinals, and then the women.*)

DEACON BRODIE.

Adapted from a play by W. E. Henley and R. L. Stevenson, entitled "Deacon Brodie, or the Double Life."

CHARACTERS.

William Brodie, *called Deacon, that is Master, of the Carpenters.*

William Lawson, *a Justice of the Law, Brodie's Uncle.*

Walter Leslie, *a young man engaged to marry Brodie's sister.*

Mary Brodie, *sister of the Deacon.*

Jean Watt, *the secret wife of the Deacon.*

Hunt, *a special police officer.*

Situation.—DEACON BRODIE *by day appears to be an industrious and skilled carpenter, but at night is the expert of a gang of housebreakers. On this particular night he has retired early, locked his door, changed his clothes, jumped out of his window and joined the gang. His old father has died in his absence, and his sister and the Doctor have forced his door, only to find the room empty and window open. One of the gang has proved treacherous and* BRODIE *has stabbed him, and then hurried home expecting to prove an alibi through his sister and his closed room.*

The night before the murder, BRODIE *has been caught by* LAWSON *and* LESLIE *in a burglary and has promised to fly from the country and begin a new life across the*

ocean. He has this in mind in his last words, but the meaning shifts to the "land of the hereafter."

There should be a table on the platform, a lamp or candle at hand, and by supposition there is the open window through which BRODIE *enters, and the broken door through which all the others come in.*

The platform or stage should be dark as the curtain is drawn; only light enough to see the DEACON *crawl in through the window. After a few sentences he lights a a candle himself.*

Enter BRODIE *through the window.*

BRODIE (*after a pause and a sigh*).—Saved! And the alibi! Man, but you've been near it this time—near the rope, near the rope. Ah, boy, it was your neck; your neck you fought for. They were closing hell-doors upon me, swift as the wind, when I slipped through and shot for heaven! Saved! The dog that sold me, I settled him; and the other dogs are staunch. Man, but your alibi will stand! Is the window fast? (*He returns to it, closes and carefully locks it.*) The neighbors must not see the Deacon, the poor, sick Deacon, up and stirring at this time o' night. —Ay, the good old room in the good, cosy old house—— and the rat a dead rat, and all saved. (*He lights the candles.*)—Your hand shakes, sir? Fie! And you saved, and you snug and sick in your bed, and *it* but a dead rat after all? (*He takes off his belt and lays it on the table.*) Ay, it was a near touch. Will it come to the dock?* If it does! You've a tongue, and you've a head, and you've an alibi; and your alibi will stand. (*He takes off his coat, takes out the dagger, and makes a gesture of striking.*) Home! He fell without a sob. "He breaketh them against the bosses

*Will it come to trial in court.

of his buckler!" (*He lays the dagger on the table.*) Your alibi——ah Deacon, that's your life!——your alibi, your alibi. (*He takes up a candle and turns towards the door.*) O!——Open, open, open! Judgment of God, the door is open!

Enter MARY BRODIE.

BRODIE.—Did you open the door?

MARY.—I did.

BRODIE.—You——you opened the door?

MARY.—I did open it.

BRODIE.—Were you——alone?

MARY.—I was not. The servant was with me; and the doctor.

BRODIE.—O——the servant——and the doctor. Very true. Then it's all over the town by now. The servant and the doctor. The doctor? What doctor? Why the doctor?

MARY.—My father is dead. O Will, where have you been?

BRODIE.—Your father is dead. O yes! He's dead, is he? Dead. Quite right. Quite right——How did you open the door? It's strange, I bolted it.

MARY.—We could not help it, Will, now could we? The doctor forced it. He had to, had he not?

BRODIE.—The doctor forced it? The doctor? Was he here? He forced it? He?

MARY.—We did it for the best; it was I who did it——I, your own sister. And O Will, my Willie, where have you been? You have not been in any harm, any danger?

BRODIE.—Danger? O my young lady, you have taken care of that. It's not danger now, it's death. Death? Ah! Death! Death! Death! (*He clutches the table; and then recovers as from a dream.*) Death? Did you say my father was dead? My father? O my God, my poor old

father! Is he dead, Mary? Have I lost him? is he gone? O, Mary dear, and to think of where his son was!

MARY.—Dearest, he is in heaven.

BRODIE.—Did he suffer?

MARY.—He died like a child. Your name——it was his last.

BRODIE.—My name? Mine? O Mary, if he had known! He knows now. He knows; he sees us now——sees me! Ay, and sees you, left how lonely!

MARY.—Not so, dear; not while you live. Wherever you are, I shall not be alone, so you live.

BRODIE.—While I live? I? The old house is ruined, and the old master dead, and I!——O Mary, try and believe I did not mean that it should come to this; try and believe that I was only weak at first. At first? And now! The good old man dead, the kind sister ruined, the innocent boy fallen, fallen——! You will be quite alone; all your old friends, all the old faces, gone into darkness. The night (*in despair*)——it waits for me. You will be quite alone.

MARY (*with a shudder*).—The night!

BRODIE.—Mary, you must hear. How am I to tell her, and the old man just dead! Mary, I was the boy you knew; I loved pleasure, I was weak; I have fallen——low——lower than you think. A beginning is so small a thing! I never dreamed it would come to this——this hideous last night.

MARY.—Willie, you must tell me, dear. I must have the truth——the kind truth——at once——in pity.

BRODIE.—Crime. I have fallen. Crime.

MARY.—Crime? (*She draws away from him in horror.*)

BRODIE.—Don't shrink from me. Miserable dog that I am, selfish hound that has dragged you to this misery——you and all that loved him——think only of my torments,

think only of my penitence, don't shrink from me.

MARY.—I do not care to hear, I do not wish, I do not mind; you are my brother. What do I care? How can I help you?

BRODIE.—Help? help *me?* You would not speak of it, nor wish it, if you knew. My kind good sister, my little playmate, my sweet friend! Was I ever unkind to you till yesterday? Not openly unkind? you'll say that when I'm gone.

MARY.—If you have done wrong, what do I care? If you have failed, does it change my twenty years of love and worship? Never!

BRODIE.—Yet I must make her understand——!

MARY.—I am your true sister, dear. I cannot fail, I will never leave you, I will never blame you. Come! (*She approaches to embrace him.*)

BRODIE (*recoiling*).—No, don't touch me, not a finger, not that, anything but that!

MARY.—Willie, Willie!

BRODIE (*he takes the bloody dagger from the table*).—See, do you understand that?

MARY (*horrified*).—Ah! What, what is it?

BRODIE.—Blood. I have killed a man.

MARY.—You?

BRODIE.—I am a murderer; I was a thief before. Your brother——the old man's only son!

MARY (*turning away from him and calling for her lover*).—Walter, Walter, come to me!

BRODIE.—Now you see that I must die; now you see that I stand upon the grave's edge, all my lost life behind me, like a horror to think upon, like a frenzy, like a dream that is past. And you, you are alone. Father, brother, they are gone from you; one to heaven, one——!

MARY (*she has turned towards him again*).—Hush, dear, hush! Kneel, pray; it is not too late to repent. Think of your father, dear; repent. (*She weeps and says with an appealing gesture.*) O Willie, darling boy, repent and join us.

Enter LAWSON, LESLIE *and* JEAN.

LAWSON.—She kens a', thank the guid Lord!

BRODIE (*to Mary*).—I know you forgive me now, I ask no more. (*Indicating Leslie.*) That is a good man. (*To Leslie*) Will you take her from my hands? (*Leslie takes her.*) Jean, are ye here to see the end?

JEAN.—Eh man, can ye no fly? Could ye no say that it was me?

BRODIE.—No, Jean, this is where it ends. Uncle, this is where it ends. And to think that not an hour ago I still had hopes! Hopes! Ay, not an hour ago I thought of a new life. You were not forgotten, Jean. Leslie, you must try to forgive me——you, too.

LESLIE.—You are her brother.

BRODIE (*to Lawson*).—And you?

LAWSON.—My name-child and my sister's bairn!

BRODIE.—You won't forget Jean, will you? nor the child?

LAWSON.—That I will not.

MARY.—O Willie, nor I.

Enter HUNT.

HUNT.—The game's up, Deacon. I'll trouble you to come along with me.

BRODIE (*behind the table, while Hunt is near the door*).—One moment, officer: I have a word to say before witnesses ere I go. In all this there is but one man guilty; and that man is I. None else has sinned; none else must suffer. This poor woman (*pointing to Jean*) I have used; she never

understood. Mr. Justice, that is my dying confession. (*He snatches his dagger from the table, rushes at Hunt who parries and runs him through. He reels across the stage and falls.*) The new life——the new life! (*He dies.*)

THE END.

NOTE.—Another ending would be for Brodie to take a small bottle of poison from his pocket or from the table and as he drank it, have Hunt, with a kind of curse that his victim was thus escaping him, stride and lunge toward him. He would sink down as before.

This saves the extremely difficult fencing to kill on the stage.

PIZARRO AND ROLLA.

Adapted from " Pizarro," a play by Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

CHARACTERS.

Pizarro, *a cruel, Spanish conqueror.*

Rolla, *a valiant, gentle, daring Peruvian chief.*

Elvira, *wife of Pizarro, ambitious, bold and haughty.*

Situation.—PIZARRO *and the Spanish troops have fought with the Peruvians under* ROLLA *and* ALONZO *(a Spaniard who has gone over to the Peruvians because he does not believe in the slaughter of this innocent people), and have made* ALONZO *prisoner.* ROLLA *has with the aid of* ELVIRA *has rescued* ALONZO. ELVIRA, *whose love for* PIZARRO *has turned to hatred on account of his cruelty, introduces* ROLLA *into the tent of the sleeping* PIZARRO. *She gives him a dagger to slay his enemy with. Just here the following scene comes.*

PIZARRO *is on a couch in disturbed sleep.*

PIZARRO (*in his sleep*).—No mercy, traitor!—Now at his heart!—Stand off there, you!—Let me see him bleed! Ha! ha! ha!—Let me hear that groan again.

Enter ROLLA *and* ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.—There! Now lose not a minute.

ROLLA.—You must leave me now. This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

ELVIRA.—But a moment's pause may—

ROLLA.—Go, retire to your own tent, and return not here——I will come to you. Be thou not known in this business, I implore you!

ELVIRA.—I will withdraw the guard that waits. (*She goes out.*)

ROLLA.—Now have I in my power the accursed destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests. God! can this man sleep?

PIZARRO (*in his sleep*).—Away! away! hideous fiends! Tear not my bosom thus!

ROLLA.—No I was in error—the balm of sweet repose he never more can know. Look here, ambition's fools! ye by whose inhuman pride the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing, behold the rest of the guilty! He is at my mercy—and one blow!—No! my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin! Yet Elvira must be saved! (*He approaches the couch.*) Pizarro! awake!

PIZARRO (*he starts up*).—Who?—Guard!

ROLLA.—Speak not—another word is thy death. Call not for aid! this arm will be swifter than thy guard.

PIZARRO.—Who art thou? and what is thy will?

ROLLA.—I am thine enemy. Peruvian Rolla! Thy death is not my will, or I could have slain thee sleeping.

PIZARRO.—Speak, what else?

ROLLA.—Now thou art at my mercy, answer me! Did a Peruvian ever yet wrong or injure thee, or any of thy nation? Didst thou, or any of thy nation, ever yet show mercy to a Peruvian in thy power? Now shalt thou feel, and if thou hast a heart thou'lt feel it keenly, a Peruvian's vengeance! (*He drops the dagger at his feet.*) There!

PIZARRO.—Is it possible? (*He walks aside dumfounded.*)

ROLLA.—Can Pizarro be surprised at this? I thought forgiveness of injuries had been the Christian's precept. Thou seest, at least, it is the Peruvian's practice.

PIZARRO.—Rolla, thou hast indeed surprised—subdued me. (*He walks again apart irresolutely.*)

Re-enter ELVIRA, *not seeing* PIZARRO.

ELVIRA.—Is it done? Is he dead? (*She sees Pizarro.*) How, still living! Then I am lost! And for you, wretched Peruvians! mercy is no more! O Rolla: treacherous or cowardly?

PIZARRO (*amazed at presence of Elvira*).—How! can it be that——

ROLLA.—Away!—(*To Pizarro.*) Elvira speaks she knows not what—(*To Elvira.*)—Leave me, I conjure you, with Pizarro.

ELVIRA.—How! Rolla dost thou think I shall retract? or that I meanly will deny that in thy hand I placed a poignard to be plunged into that tyrant's heart? No: my sole regret is, that I trusted to thy weakness, and did not strike the blow myself. Too soon thou'lt learn that mercy to that man is direct cruelty to all thy race.

PIZARRO.—Guard! quick! a guard, to seize this frantic woman.

ELVIRA.—Yes, a guard! I call them too! And soon I know they'll lead me to my death. But think not, Pizarro, the fury of thy flashing eyes shall awe me for a moment. Though defeated and destroyed, as now I am, I shall perish glorying in the attempt—to have rescued millions of innocents from the blood-thirsty tyranny of one—by ridding the insulted world of thee.

ROLLA.—Had the act been noble as the motive, Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter GUARDS.

PIZARRO.—Seize this discovered fiend, who sought to kill your leader.

ELVIRA.—Touch me not, at the peril of your souls: I am your prisoner, and will follow you. But thou, their triumphant leader, first shall hear me.

PIZARRO.—Why am I not obeyed? Tear her hence!

ELVIRA.—'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou wouldst pity me.

ROLLA.—From my soul I do pity thee.

PIZARRO.—Villains! drag her to the dungeon!—prepare the torture instantly.

ELVIRA.—Soldiers, but a moment more—'tis to applaud your general. It is to tell the astonished world that for once, Pizarro's sentence is an act of justice: yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agonized the human frame, it will be justice. Yes, bid the minions of thy fury wrench forth the sinews of those arms that have caressed—and even have defended thee! And when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death, hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries, I will not utter one shriek or groan; but to the last gasp my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance, as my soul defies thy powers.

PIZARRO.—Hearest thou the wretch whose hands were even now prepared for murder?

ROLLA.—Yes! and if her accusation's false, thou wilt not shrink from hearing her; if true, thy barbarity cannot make her suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on thee.

ELVIRA.—And now, farewell, world!—Rolla, farewell!—farewell (*to Pizarro*) thou condemned of heaven! for repentance and remorse, I know will never touch thy heart.—We shall meet again—Ha! be it thy horror here to know

that we shall meet hereafter! To me the thought is madness!—what will it be to thee?

PIZARRO.—A moment's more delay——

ELVIRA.—I have spoken. I go to meet my destiny. That I could not live nobly, has been Pizarro's act; that I will die nobly, shall be my own. (*She goes out guarded.*)

PIZARRO.—Rolla, I would not thou, a warrior, valiant and renowned shouldst credit the vile tales of this frantic woman. The cause of all this fury—oh! a passion for the rebel youth, Alonzo, now my prisoner.

ROLLA.—Alonzo is not now thy prisoner.

PIZARRO.—How?

ROLLA.—I came to rescue him—to deceive the guard. I have succeeded; I remain thy prisoner.

PIZARRO.—Alonzo fled! Is then the vengeance dearest to my heart never to be gratified?

ROLLA.—Dismiss such passions from thy heart, then thou'lt consult its peace.

PIZARRO.—I can face all enemies that dare confront me—I cannot war against my nature.

ROLLA.—Then, Pizarro, ask not to be deemed a hero: to triumph o'er ourselves is the only conquest where fortune makes no claim.

PIZARRO.—Peruvian, thou shalt not find me to thee ungrateful or ungenerous. Return to your countrymen—you are at liberty.

ROLLA.—Thou dost act in this as honor and as duty bid thee.

PIZARRO.—I cannot but admire thee, Rolla: I would we might be friends.

ROLLA.—Farewell! pity Elvira! become the friend of virtue—and thou wilt be mine. (*He goes out.*)

PIZARRO.—Ambition! tell me what is the phantom I

have followed? Where is the one delight which it has made my own? My fame is the mark of envy, my love the dupe of treachery, my revenge defeated and rebuked by the rude horror of a savage foe, before whose native dignity of soul I have sunk confounded and subdued. I would I could retrace my steps—I cannot. Would I could evade my own reflections! No, thought and memory are my hell! (*He goes out.*)

CURTAIN.

RAIMOND RELEASED.

Adapted from "The Vespers of Palermo," by Mrs. Hemans.

CHARACTERS.

Raimond, *a vigorous young man, of frank, generous countenance.*

Anselmo, *a priest of middle age.*

Vittoria, *an elderly woman of very queenly bearing.*

Situation.—*The death of* CONRADIN, *king of Sicily, at the invasion by the French, prevented* VITTORIA *from marrying him and made her an insatiate hater of the French who then ruled the island. After many years the father of* RAIMOND *heads some patriots who regain control of Sicily.* RAIMOND *nobly refuses to slaughter without warning, even his enemies. He is found guilty of treason and cast into prison to be killed the next day; but the French reappear before the gates of Palermo, and just here comes the scene following. It is in the prison.* ANSELMO *comes to give him ghostly counsel.* VITTORIA *searches for* ANSELMO *and finds him in the prison cell.* RAIMOND *is released to call the Sicilians back to their duty.*

RAIMOND *and* ANSELMO.

RAIMOND.— And Constance,* then, is safe! — Heaven bless thee, father!

* With whom Raimond is in love.

Good angels bear such comfort.

ANSELMO.— All that faith
Can yield of comfort, shall assuage her woes;
And still whate'er betide, the light of Heaven
Rests on her gentle heart. But thou, my son,
Is thy young spirit master'd and prepared
For nature's fearful and mysterious change?

RAIMOND.—Ay, father! of my brief remaining task
The least part is to die!—It was my hope
To leave a name, whose echo, from the abyss
Of time should rise, and float upon the winds,
Into the far hereafter; there to be
A trumpet-sound, a voice from the deep tomb
Murmuring—Awake! Arise!—But this is past!
Erewhile, and it had seemed enough of shame,
To sleep *forgotten* in the dust—but now
Oh, God!—the undying record of my grave
Will be—Here sleeps a traitor!—One whose crime,
Was—to deem brave men might find nobler weapons
Than the cold murderer's dagger!

ANSELMO.— Oh, my son,
Subdue these troubled thoughts! Thou wouldst not change
Thy lot for theirs, o'er whose dark streams will hang
The avenging shadows, which the blood-stained soul
Doth conjure from the dead!

RAIMOND.— Thou'rt right—Would th' hour
To hush these passionate throbbings were at hand!

ANSELMO.—It will not be to-day. Hast thou not heard—
But no—the rush, the trampling, and the stir
Of this great city, arming in her haste,
Pierce not these dungeon-depths.—The foe hath reached
Our gates, and all Palermo's youth, and all
Her warrior-men, are marshall'd, and gone forth

In that high hope which makes realities,
To the red field. Thy father leads them on.
RAIMOND (*starting up*). — They are gone forth! my father leads them on!
All—all Palermo's youth!—No! *one* is left,
Shut out from glory's race! They are gone forth!—
Ay, now the soul of battle is abroad,
It burns upon the air!—And such things are
Even now—and I am here!
ANSELMO.— Alas, be calm!
To the same grave ye press—thou that dost pine
Beneath a weight of chains, and they that rule
The fortunes of the fight.
RAIMOND.— Yet not the same;
Their graves who fall in this day's fight, will be
As altars to——
VITTORIA *rushes in wildly, as if pursued.*
VITTORIA.— Anselmo! art thou found?
Haste, haste, or all is lost! Perchance thy voice,
And prophet mien, may stay the fugitives,
Or shame them back to die.
ANSELMO.— The fugitives!
What words are these!—The sons of Sicily
Fly not before the foe?
VITTORIA.— That I should say
It is too true!
ANSELMO.—And thou—thou bleedest, lady!
VITTORIA.—Peace, heed not me, when Sicily is lost!
I stood upon the walls and watched,—when, lo!
That false Alberti led his recreant vassals
To join th' invader's host.
RAIMOND.— His country's curse
Rest on the slave for ever!

VITTORIA.— Then distrust
E'en of their noble leaders, and dismay
That swift contagion, on Palermo's lands
Came like a deadly blight. They fled !—Oh, shame !
RAIMOND.—And I am *here !* Shall there be power, O God !
In the roused energies of fierce despair,
To burst my heart—and not to rend my chains?
Oh, for one moment of the thunderbolt
To set the strong man free !
VITTORIA (*she has been gazing earnestly at him during this speech*).—Why, 'twere a deed
Worthy the fame and blessing of all time,
To loose thy bonds—for from thy kindled brow
Looks out thy lofty soul !—Arise ! Go forth !
And rouse the noble heart of Sicily
Unto high deeds again. Anselmo, haste ;
Unbind him ! Let my spirit still prevail,
Ere I depart—for the strong hand of death
Is on me now. (*She sinks back against a pillar.*)
ANSELMO.—O Heaven ! the life-blood streams
Fast from thy heart—thy troubled eyes grow dim.
Who hath done this?
VITTORIA.— Before the gates I stood,
And in the name of him, the loved and lost,
With whom I soon shall be, all vainly strove
To stay the shameful flight. Then from the foe,
Fraught with my summons, to his viewlesss home,
Came the fleet shaft which pierced me.
ANSELMO.— Yet, oh yet,
It may not be too late. (*He shouts.*) Help, help !
VITTORIA.— Away !
Bright is the hour which brings me liberty !

ATTENDANTS *enter.*

Haste, be those fetters riven !—Unbar the gates,
And set the captive free ! (*They hesitate.*) Know ye not *her*
Who would have worn your country's diadem?

ATTENDANTS.—Oh ! lady, we obey. (*They take off Raimond's chains.*)

RAIMOND (*springing up*).—Is this no dream?
And am I free?—Now for bright arms of proof,
A helm, a keen-edged falchion, and e'en yet
My father may be saved !

VITTORIA.— Away, be strong !
And let thy battle-word, to rule the storm,
Be—*Conradin.* (*He rushes out.*) Oh ! for one hour of life,
To hear that name blent with th' exulting shout
Of victory ! It will not be !—A mightier power
Doth summon me away.

ANSELMO.— To purer worlds
Raise thy last thoughts in hope.

VITTORIA.— Yes ! *he* is there
All glorious in his beauty !—Conradin !
Death parted us—and death shall reunite !
He will not stay—it is all darkness now !
Night gathers o'er my spirit. (*She dies.*)

ANSELMO. She is gone !
It is an awful hour which stills the heart
That beat so proudly once. Have mercy, Heaven ! (*He kneels beside her.*)

CURTAIN.

MRS. HARWOOD'S SECRET.

Adapted from "The Story of a Governess," by Mrs. M. O. W. Oliphant.

CHARACTERS.

John Harding, *a powerful, kindly intelligent man of middle age, physician from Liverpool.*

Adolphus Harwood, *an old man with pale face and long white beard and hair—insane over business irregularities.*

Dolff Harwood, *his son, a large, rather dull young man of obstinate character.*

Charles Meredith, *a bright handsome man who is to be married to Gussy Harwood.*

Vicars, *valet to Mr. Harwood, a strong brusque man.*

Mrs. Julia Harwood, *an old lady, so paralyzed she can scarcely walk, and has to be wheeled about in a chair.*

Gussy Harwood, *her eldest daughter.*

Julia Harwood, *her youngest child.*

Janet Summerhayes, *governess to Julia—about to be married to Dr. Harding.*

Situation.—Mrs. Harwood *for years has kept her husband* Adolphus Harwood, *now hopelessly insane, in a supposedly unoccupied wing of her house. By accident the family discovers the secret of the wing, but they do*

not know that the insanity has behind it dishonest financial operations. JANET, JULIA'S *governess, anxious to get away from so much horror, remembers* DR. HARDING, *whose hand she rejected six months ago, and sends him a note of acceptance.* DR. HARDING *hastens from Liverpool to claim her as his bride. He is greatly surprised to discover that* ADOLPHUS HARWOOD, *who victimized him years before, still lives. His sense of justice dominates him, but the sight of the piteous figure of the white-haired old man changes his resolution, and he departs—with his bride-to-be.*

Scene I.

MR. HARWOOD *enters followed closely by his valet,* VICARS; *then enter* MEREDITH *and* GUSSY, DOLFF *and* JULIA.

MR. HARWOOD (*in the centre of platform*).—I know what you've come for. I can pay up! I can pay up! I've plenty of money, and I can pay up! But I won't be taken, not if it costs me my life.

VICARS (*behind him, holding his arms*).—Come, sir; come, sir, no more of this; they'll take you for a fool.

MRS. HARWOOD *staggers in, pushing* JANET *before her.*

MRS. HARWOOD.—Take him back to his room, Vicars; take him back. Adolphus! (*She stands erect in front of the maniac and puts her hand on his breast.*) Adolphus, go back, be silent, calm yourself. There is no need for you to say anything. I am here to take care of you. Let Vicars lead you back to your room.

MR. HARWOOD.—I will not be taken, I will not be taken! I can pay up! I have got money, plenty of money. I will pay up! (*He struggles in vain to free himself from the grasp of Vicars.*) Vicars, get it out, and give it to your mistress. The money—the money, you know, to pay

everybody up. Only (*he looks to Mrs. Harwood who stands leaning on the table, and he clasps his hands and whimpers*) don't—don't let them take me away!

GUSSY (*falling on her knees and covering her face with her hands*).—Oh, mamma, I can't bear it—I can't bear it.

DOLFF (*stepping forward and speaking roughly*).—Who is he? I know nothing about this, nothing. (*He looks round.*) I hope everybody will believe me. I want to know who he is. (*Janet quietly slips out.*)

MRS. HARWOOD (*She pays no attention to any but Vicars and the insane man. Vicars takes an old, large pocket-book from an inside pocket of his patient and hands it to her with a smile. She takes it and tosses it on the table*).—There are in this pocket-book old scraps of paper of no value. This is what I am to pay his debts with. He has given it to me twenty times before. I get tired in the end of playing the old game over and over.

DOLFF.—Mother, who is he? You have had him in your house in secret, never seeing the light of day, and I, your son, never knew. Who is he?

VICARS (*struggling with Mr. Harwood*).—I can answer for nothing, Mrs. Harwood, if you keep him with a lot of folks. He is working himself up into a fury again.

MR. HARWOOD (*twisting about*).—She has got my money, and she throws it down for anybody to pick up. My money! there's money there to pay everything. Why don't you pay these people and let 'em go—pay them, pay them and let them go! or else give me back my money. (*He struggles, his eyes blaze.*)

MRS. HARWOOD (*she takes up the pocket-book, balances it a moment and hands it to Vicar*).—You think there may be a fortune here—enough to pay? And he thinks so. Give it to him, Vicars. We've tried to keep it all quiet,

but it seems to have failed. Take him back to his apartments, Vicars.

MR. HARWOOD (*he holds pocket-book in both hands and kisses it again and again*).—As long as I have got this they can do nothing to me. (*Vicars takes him out.*)

GUSSY (*stepping up to Mrs. Harwood*).—Mamma shall we go away? Whatever there may be to be said or explained, it cannot be done now. If any wrong has been done him, I don't know of it. I thought it was nothing but good.

MRS. HARWOOD (*losing her self command and her strength*).—No wrong has been done him—none—none. Children you may not believe me, since I've kept it secret from you. There has been no wrong to him—none—none. Everything has been done for him. Look at his room and you will see.

DOLFF (*obstinately*).—Who is he?

MRS. HARWOOD.—You have no thought of me. You see me standing here, come here to defend you all, in desperation for you, and you never ask how I am to get back to my chair, whether it will kill me—(*they start away*). No, no, Janet has gone, who was a stranger and asked no questions, but only helped a poor woman half mad with trouble and distress.—Ah! he could go mad and get free—he who was the cause of it all; but I have had to keep my sanity and my courage and bear it all, and look as if nothing was the matter for fifteen years. For whom? For you, children, to give you a happy life, to do away with all disgrace, to give you every advantage.—Now go away all of you. (*Gussy and Meredith go out, while Julia offers her mother her arm.*) Yes, I'll take your arm, Julia: you have not been a good child, but you know no better. Get me to my chair before I drop down, for I am very heavy——

DOLFF (*stolidly*).—I am not a boy any longer. You have made me a man. Who is it you have been hiding for years upstairs?

MRS. HARWOOD (*with a little fierce laugh*).—For my pleasure, for my amusement, as anybody may see.

DOLFF.—Whether it is for your amusement or not, I am of age, and I have a right to know who is living in my house.

MRS. HARWOOD.—In *your* house! (*Excitedly.*) He has neither been tried, nor sentenced, nor anything proved against him. All that has to be gone through, before he can be put aside. And at this moment everything's his—the roof that covers you, the money you have been spending. It is no more your house—*your* house!—than it is Julia's. It is your father's house.

DOLFF (*aghast*).—My father is dead.

MRS. HARWOOD.—Yes, and might have remained so, had it not been for your cowardly folly and Vicars' infatuation for you. Had he not sense to see that a fool like you would spoil it all?

DOLFF.—You are dreaming, you are mad, you are telling me another lie.

JULIA.—How dare you speak to her like that? I should be ashamed to look any one in the face. Go away, go away, and leave us quiet. (*He goes out, and Julia helps her mother slowly out.*)

Scene II.

MRS. HARWOOD *is seated in her invalid's chair a little to one side of the centre of the platform; beyond her is* JULIA. *Enter from opposite side* DR. HARDING *with* JANET *on his arm.*

MRS. HARWOOD.—Why, Janet!

JANET (*falteringly*).—I have brought an old friend to see you.

DR. HARDING.—John Harding, at your service, Mrs. Harwood, now as long ago.

MRS. HARWOOD (*greatly dismayed*).—Oh!

JANET.—Dr. Harding has come to take me away with him.

DR. HARDING.—Yes, Janet has at last consented to make me happy and we shall be married immediately.

MRS. HARWOOD (*she whispers aside to Julia.*)—Don't let Dolff come in here.

JULIA (*aloud*).—Why not? (*Her mother merely pushes her away.*)

MRS. HARWOOD.—Things have changed very much for us all; I have a daughter on the eve of marriage, like you, Dr. Harding——a man who does not marry keeps so much longer young. You may remember my Gussy as a child——

DR. HARDING.—I remember my little wife that is to be as a child, and she might well have despised an old fellow. Yes, things have changed. It was very good for me as it turns out that I could not go on in my old way. I've been a hardworking man, and kept very close to it for a long time, and now things are mending with me. I shall be able to give this little thing what they all like—a carriage and finery and all that. I am going back—to the old place, Mrs. Harwood——

MRS. HARWOOD (*with a start*).—To Liverpool.

DR. HARDING.—Yes, to Liverpool; they had heard of me, it appears, and then some of the old folks remembered I was a townsman. You have not kept up much connection with the old place, Mrs. Harwood.

MRS. HARWOOD.—None at all; you may suppose it would not be very pleasant for me.

DR. HARDING.—Perhaps not (*he drums a little with his finger on his knee*); and yet I don't know why, for there was always a great deal of sympathy with you.

MRS. HARWOOD (*nervously and eagerly*).—Dr. Harding, may I ask you a favor? It is, please, not to speak of me to any of my old friends. You may think it strange—there is nobody else in the room, is there, Janet?——but I would rather the children did not know more than is necessary about the past.

DR. HARDING (*bluntly*).—I understand; and I honor you, madam.

MRS. HARWOOD (*hurriedly*).—I ask for no honor, so long as it is thought that I have done my duty by the children.

DR. HARDING.—I should think there could not be much doubt of that.

After a moment of silence, enter DOLFF, *followed closely by* JULIA.

MRS. HARWOOD (*recovering from a feeling of despair at sight of Dolff*).—My son, Dr. Harding. Dolff, Dr. Harding is a friend of Janet's and—and an old acquaintance of mine.

DR. HARDING (*rising and giving the young man his hand*).—I did not know your son was grown up. I thought he was the youngest.

MRS. HARWOOD.—No, it is Julia who is the youngest.

DR. HARDING (*heartily*).—It is quite curious to find myself among old friends. I expected to find only my little Janet, and here I am surrounded by people whom I knew in the old days in Liverpool before she was born.

DOLFF.—But we have nothing to do with Liverpool.

MRS. HARWOOD.—Welsh.

DR. HARDING.—Ah, yes, by origin; the little property's there, is'nt it? But Harwood has been a well-known name in Liverpool for longer than any of us can recollect. I remember (*sadly*) when it was talked of like the Bank of England.

MRS. HARWOOD (*with a great effort at self control, sitting bolt upright*).—Oh, I am not fond of those old recollections; they always lead to something sad.

DOLFF.—This is very interesting to me for I never heard of it before. My mother has told us very little, Dr. Harding; I should be very grateful for a little information.

DR. HARDING.—My dear young fellow, I daresay your mother's very wise. Least said is soonest mended. That's all over and done with. It all went to pieces, you know, when your father (*he is embarrassed for a moment*)—when your father—died. (*Mrs. Harwood sinks back with a long breath almost swooning.*)

DOLFF.—If you think that this is satisfactory to me, you are making an immense mistake. Why should least said be soonest mended? Is there any disgrace belonging to our name? Besides, my father——is not dead.

DR. HARDING (*jumping from his chair as if stung*).—What? What? Adolphus Harwood not dead? My God! Adolphus Harwood? What does this mean? (*Mrs. Harwood makes convulsive efforts to speak and to rise from her chair.*)

DOLFF.—I don't know why you speak in such a tone. There is no harm, I suppose, in my father—being alive. We never knew till the other day. Perhaps *she* (*pointing to his mother,*) can tell you why. Is there any harm in my father—not having died?

DR. HARDING.—Harm! Adolphus Harwood alive!—harm! Only this harm—that I can't let old friendship stand in the way. I dare not do injustice; he must be given up to answer for his ill-doings. Harm! The fool! He never did but what was the worst for him! to live till now—with all the misery and the ruin that he brought——

DOLFF (*seizing the doctor by the breast*).—Stop! Tell

me what he has done?—I knew—I knew there was more in it; what has he done?

DR. HARDING (*flinging the young man off*).—Done! ruined everybody that ever trusted in him! Don't stop me, young man! Keep yourself clear of him! I cannot help it; I am sorry for your sake—but he must be given up. (*He picks up his hat and begins to button his coat.*)

DOLFF.—To what? To what? (*He jumps in front of Dr. Harding and raises his arm excitedly as if to strike.*) Look here! to what? You don't stir a foot from here till you tell me.

MRS. HARWOOD (*stumbling in between the two men, putting one hand on Dr. Harding's breast and pushing her son away with the other*).—John Harding! John Harding, listen to me! He is mad—mad, do you hear? Mad! What is that but dead?

DOLFF.—Mother, let this man answer me!

MRS. HARWOOD.—Oh, go away, go away with your folly!—He is mad, John Harding! He came back to me mad—could I turn my husband to the door, give him up to the police? Listen to me (*she seizes his coat to hold herself up*) you can see him yourself if you doubt me—he is mad (*she shrieks*). Mad as a March hare,—silly! Oh, John Harding, John Harding, hear what I have got to say!

DR. HARDING (*he suddenly changes, becomes a professional man; he throws down his hat and holds her fast by the elbows*).—Wheel her chair forward. Young Harwood, gently, send for her maid. Heavens, boy, be gentle; do you want to kill your mother? Janet, come round here and put the cushions straight, to support her head. There, quiet all of you. Let her rest; and you, Janet, give her air.

DOLFF (*passionately*).—She has done it before. Oh, I

am not taken in, mother. Let her alone, man, and answer me!

DR. HARDING (*he pushes the young man away*).—Go to the devil! You confounded cub, be quiet, and let the poor woman come to herself! (*Dolff goes to one side and with an injured air watches affairs.*) Give me the fan (*to Janet*). Get some wine and moisten her lips. Such an effort as that to a woman in her state might be fatal. She must have the constitution of an elephant. Once before, did you say? Janet, my little darling, you're made for a doctor's wife. Now raise her head a little. There! Now I hope she'll come to.

DOLFF (*he comes up and strikes him on the shoulder*).—You make yourself busy about my mother. There's nothing the matter with my mother: but you've got to explain to me—What does it mean? What do you want with him? What has he done? I never knew he was there till the other day. And then I never suspected he was my father. Oh, don't you know when one never has had a father, what one thinks he must have been? And then to see—that! But I must have satisfaction. What has he done? What are you going to do?

Enter GUSSY *and* MEREDITH *hastily.*

GUSSY (*glancing at Mrs. Harwood*).—Is my mother ill? Something has gone wrong. Dolff, who is this gentleman? And for heaven's sake tell me what is it now? What has gone wrong? (*She goes to her brother's side and stands looking on.*)

DR. HARDING.—I presume that you are Miss Harwood, but I cannot explain this matter to you. The less you know of it the better, my dear young people. I have no ill-feeling to your poor father—not the least, not the least: though I was one of the victims, I hope I've forgiven him freely.

But justice is justice. If Adolphus Harwood is in this house, he must be given up.

MEREDITH.—Dear Gussy, will you take my advice and go away, and get Dolff to go? Let me speak to this gentleman. I know all about the business affairs. I am to appear for your mother, you know. Let me speak to him and hear what he has to say. (*She gives a faint smile. They all stand round the doctor, as if hemming him in.*)

DR. HARDING (*with emotion*).—God knows how I feel for you, your poor children. You break my heart; but if Adolphus Harwood has been living quietly here, living in comfort and luxury here, after bringing so many to ruin——

MEREDITH.—He has been living concealed in a couple of rooms for fifteen years. I don't know who you are, or what right you have to be here, or to inquire into the affairs of this family.

GUSSY.—Oh, hush! He will be a friend, he has a kind face!

JULIA.—His name is Dr. Harding, he came for Janet, but mamma said he was an old friend: and Dolff told him by chance that *he—he*, you know—was living and not dead.

DR. HARDING.—This is all mere madness. I did not want to know anything of the affairs of the family, but I have my duty to do——I must do what is my duty.

MRS. HARWOOD (*faintly from her chair*).—See him; see him, see him: a doctor, he will know. (*All turn round startled.*)

MEREDITH (*seizing the doctor's arm*).—Come here and look at the man for yourself. (*They step to the door and look out. All watch them. The following dialogue is heard from without.*)

HARWOOD (*without*).—Why do you bring me in, when I

don't want to come in, Vicars? Dark—I like it when its dark and nobody can see.

VICARS (*without*).—It don't do you no good, sir, to be out in the dark.

HARWOOD (*without*).—Ah! there's an open door. I'm going to see them, Vicars. Their mother tells them lies, but when they know I have it all here to pay up——

VICARS (*without*).—No, sir; you can't go in there to-night.

HARWOOD.—Why not to-night? Did she say so? She wants to get my money from me, that's what it is! Swear, Vicars, you'll never tell them where I keep my money! She got it and gave it to that fellow, but it came back, eh, Vicars? It always comes back. Ha, ha, ha! (*Laughing foolishly.*) Where are you taking me? You are taking me upstairs. You want me to be murdered for my money in that dark hole upstairs. (*A door without closes.*)

MEREDITH (*as they turn back to platform*).—Is this the man you are going to give up to punishment?

DR. HARDING (*He turns away and covers his face with his hands. In the intense silence he turns back and meets Mrs. Harwood's agonized gaze*).—What does he mean about the money?

MRS. HARWOOD.—He means what he thinks he has in his pocket-book——money to pay everybody. Oh, John Harding, that's no dishonest meaning. He gives it to me, to pay up——and then he is restless till he has it back again. There's nothing but old papers, old bills, worth nothing. He thinks (*eagerly*) that it is the money he took to Spain. (*She has forgotten herself.*)

DR. HARDING.—And where is the money he took to Spain?

MRS. HARWOOD (*She hesitates, looks round and then bursts into hysterical laughter*).—He! He! He! He

thinks that I know everything. How can I tell? Where are the snows of last year?

DR. HARDING (*after a moment's thought*).—Fear not, I shall do nothing,—Come, Janet, come with me. You have cheated me out of six months. I might have had you six months ago.

JANET.—Oh, no, no, Dr. Harding. (*Dr. Harding and Janet go out as curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN.

INNOCENCE REWARDED.

Adapted from Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield."

CHARACTERS.

Dr. Primrose, *Vicar of Wakefield.*

Mrs. Primrose, *his wife.*

George, *his oldest son, who is an officer in the army.*

Olivia, *his oldest daughter, who has run away with the landlord, who afterward abandoned her.*

Sophia, *another daughter, in love with* MR. BURCHELL.

Moses, *another son.*

Squire Thornhill, *a young man, landlord to the* PRIMROSES.

Mr. Burchell, *a poor but well-educated man, who becomes a friend to the family, and afterward turns out to be* SIR WILLIAM THORNHILL, *uncle to the landlord.*

Mr. Jenkinson, *a middle-aged man who has lived on his wits till he finds himself in prison, and now repents.*

The Jailer, *and two servants.*

Baxter, *a very tall, long-legged man, with red hair.*

Situation.—*Through the villainy of* SQUIRE THORNHILL, DR. PRIMROSE *has been thrown into jail for debt. His family are with him.* JENKINSON *recognizes him as a former victim and tries to repair the wrong by kindness in the prison.* OLIVIA *has stopped outside because of bad health consequent on her disgrace from the land-*

lord's abandonment of her. DR. PRIMROSE *believes her dead at the opening of this scene.*

The scene is a room in prison. DR. PRIMROSE *is lying in a very weak condition on a couch against the wall.*

Scene I.

JENKINSON *enters the room where* DR. PRIMROSE *is already lying on a couch of some rough material.*

PRIMROSE (*to Jenkinson*).—Well, sir, you discover the temper of the man that oppresses me. But let him use me as he will, I shall soon be free, in spite of all his bolts to restrain me. I am now drawing towards an abode that looks brighter as I approach it; and though I leave a helpless family of orphans behind me, yet they will not be utterly forsaken; some friend, perhaps, will be found to assist them for the sake of their poor father, and some may charitably relieve them for the sake of their heavenly Father.

Enter MRS. PRIMROSE, *with looks of terror, vainly struggling to speak.*

(*To Mrs. Primrose.*)—Why, my love, will you thus increase my afflictions by your own? What though no submissions can turn our severe master, though he has doomed me to die in this place of wretchedness, and though we have lost a darling child, yet still you will find comfort in your other children when I shall be no more.

MRS. PRIMROSE.—We have indeed lost a darling child. My Sophia, my dearest, is gone; snatched from us, carried off by ruffians!

JENKINSON.—How, madam; Miss Sophia carried off by villains? sure it cannot be!

MRS. PRIMROSE (*through her sobs*).—Yes! as we were walking together a little way out of the village, a post-chaise and pair drove up to us and stopped instantly; then a well-dressed man, but not Mr. Thornhill, stepped out, clasped my daughter round the waist, and forcing her in, bade the postilion drive on, so that they were out of sight in a moment.

PRIMROSE.—Now, the sum of my miseries is made up, nor is it in the power of anything on earth to give me another pang. What! not one left!—not to leave me one!—The monster!—The child that was next my heart!—she had the beauty of an angel, and almost the wisdom of an angel.—(*To Jenkinson.*) But support that woman, nor let her fall.—Not to leave me one!

MRS. PRIMROSE.—Alas! my husband, you seem to want comfort even more than I. Our distresses are great, but I could bear this and more, if I saw you but easy. (*Moses enters with a letter which he has just read in his hand, but stops a moment as he comprehends the situation.*) They may take away my children, and all the world, if they leave me but you.

MOSES.—My dear father, I hope there is still something that will give you an interval of satisfaction; for I have a letter from my brother George——

PRIMROSE (*interrupting*).—What of him, child? Does he know our misery? I hope my boy is exempt from any part of what his wretched family suffers.

MOSES.—Yes, sir, he is perfectly gay, cheerful, and happy. His letter brings nothing but good news; he is the favorite of his colonel, who promises to procure him the very next lieutenancy that becomes vacant.

MRS. PRIMROSE.—And are you sure of all this?

MOSES.—You shall see the letter. (*He hands it to her*

and she reads it to herself. Then he goes out, followed by Jenkinson.)

PRIMROSE.—In all our miseries, what thanks have we not to return, that one at least of our family is exempted from what we suffer! Heaven be his guard, and keep my boy thus happy, to be the support of his widowed mother, and the father of our two babes, which is all the patrimony I can now bequeath him! (*Considerable disturbance is heard outside. It dies away and the sound of clanking chains is heard. Then the Jailer enters with George in chains. Dr. Primrose starts up with horror.*) My George! my George! and do I behold thee thus? Wounded—fettered! Is this thy happiness? Is this the manner you return to me? Oh, that this sight could break my heart at once, and let me die! (*The Jailer goes out.*)

GEORGE (*with a faltering voice*).—Where, sir, is your fortitude? I must suffer; my life is forfeited, and let them take it. Sir, let it be your care now to fit me for that vile death I must shortly suffer.

PRIMROSE.—My child you must not die; I am sure no offence of thine can deserve so vile a punishment.

GEORGE.—Mine, sir, I fear is an unpardonable crime. When I received my mother's letter from home, I immediately came down, determined to punish the betrayer of our honor, and sent him an order to meet me. He answered not in person, but by despatching four of his domestics to seize me. I wounded one who first assaulted me, and I fear desperately; but the rest made me their prisoner. The proofs are undeniable; I have sent a challenge, and as I am the first transgressor upon the statute, I see no hopes of pardon. But you have often charmed me with your lessons of fortitude; let me now, sir, find them in your example.

PRIMROSE.—And, my son, you shall find them. From this moment I break from my heart all the ties that held it down to earth, and will prepare to fit us both for eternity.

Enter JENKINSON, *who pauses for a moment.*

Yes, my son, I will point out the way, and my soul shall guide yours in the ascent, for we will take our flight together.

JENKINSON.—My dear sir, there is news of your daughter. She was seen two hours ago in a strange gentleman's company. They stopped in the village for refreshment and——

Enter JAILER *in haste.*

JAILER.—Your daughter is found, sir.

Enter MOSES, *running.*

MOSES.—Sister Sophia is here, and is coming up with our old friend Mr. Burchell. (*The Jailer goes out with George, and Jenkinson follows.*)

Enter SOPHIA, *rushing to kiss her father and her mother; followed by* MR. BURCHELL.

SOPHIA.—Here, papa, is the brave man to whom I owe my delivery; to this gentleman's intrepidity I am indebted for my happiness and—— (*Mr. Burchell interrupts her with a kiss.*)

PRIMROSE.—Ah! Mr. Burchell, this is but a wretched habitation you now find us in; and we are now very different from what you last saw us. You were ever our friend; but after the vile usage you then received at my hands, I am almost ashamed to behold your face. Yet I hope you'll forgive me, as I was deceived by a base ungenerous wretch, who, under the mask of friendship, has undone me.

BURCHELL.—It is impossible that I should forgive you, as you never deserved my resentment. I partly saw your

delusion then, and as it was out of my power to restrain, I could only pity it.

PRIMROSE.—It was ever my conjecture that your mind was noble; but now I find it so.—Welcome, then, my child! and thou, her gallant deliverer, a thousand welcomes! Though our cheer is but wretched, yet our hearts are ready to receive you. And now, Mr. Burchell, as you have delivered my girl, if you think her a recompense, she is yours: if you can stoop to an alliance with a family so poor as mine, take her; obtain her consent,—as I know you have her heart,—and you have mine.

BURCHELL.—But I suppose, sir, that you are apprised of my circumstances and of my incapacity to support her as she deserves?

PRIMROSE.—If your present objection be meant as an evasion of my offer, I desist; but I know no man so worthy to deserve her as you; and if I could give her thousands, and thousands sought her from me, yet my honest brave Burchell should be my dearest choice.

BURCHELL (*turning abruptly*).—Can I be furnished with refreshments from the next inn?

PRIMROSE.—Probably there will be no difficulty. Moses, my boy, go call the jailer. (*Moses goes out and immediately returns with the Jailer.*)

BURCHELL.—Mr. Jailer, can you provide us with a table and order us from the nearest inn the best dinner possible upon such short notice?

JAILER (*with a low bow*).—Very readily, sir.

PRIMROSE.—I wish, too,—Ah, Sophia, you did not know your brother was here. (*To the Jailer.*) Cannot he come to share this little interval of satisfaction? And Mr. Jenkinson, my fellow-prisoner?

JAILER.—Certainly, sir. (*He goes out. Sophia looks in*

dumb amazement from one to another, and as George enters runs to meet him, recoiling at sight of chains.)

BURCHELL.—Is your son's name George?

PRIMROSE.—That is his name. (*Burchell seems lost in thought.*)

JAILER *enters with* GEORGE, *and then retires. Enter* JENKINSON.

Come on, my son; though we are fallen very low, yet Providence has been pleased to grant us some small relaxation from pain. Thy sister is restored to us and there is her deliverer: to that brave man it is that I am indebted for yet having a daughter; give him, my boy, the hand of friendship; he deserves our warmest gratitude. (*George looks at Mr. Burchell with astonishment and reverence, and keeps at a respectful distance, unmindful of his father's words.*)

SOPHIA.—My dear brother, why don't you thank my good deliverer? The brave should ever love each other.

BURCHELL (*finding that George recognizes him, he looks at the boy with a superior air.*)—I again find, unthinking boy, that the same crime—(*Enter Jailer who steps up to Burchell and whispers in his ear.*) Bid the fellow wait till I have leisure to receive him. (*The Jailer goes out.*)—I again find, sir, that you are guilty of the same offence for which you once had my reproof, and for which the law is now preparing its justest punishments. Where, sir, is the difference between a duellist, who hazards a life of no value, and the murderer who acts with greater security?

PRIMROSE.—Alas, sir, whoever you are, pity the poor misguided creature; for what he has done was in obedience to a deluded mother, who, in the bitterness of her resentment, required him, upon her blessing, to avenge her quarrel.

Here, sir, is the letter which will serve to convince you of her imprudence, and diminish his guilt.

BURCHELL (*he takes the letter and reads it hastily*).—This, though not a perfect excuse, is such a palliation of his fault as induces me to forgive him. And now, sir (*he steps up to George and shakes him by the hand*), I see you are surprised at finding me here; but I have often visited prisons upon occasions less interesting. I am now come to see justice done a worthy man, for whom I have the most sincere esteem. I have long been a disguised spectator of thy father's benevolence. I have, at his little dwelling, enjoyed respect uncontaminated by flattery; and have received that happiness that courts could not give, from the amusing simplicity around his fireside. My nephew has been apprised of my intentions of coming here, and I find, is arrived. It would be wronging him and you to condemn him without examination: if there be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may say without boasting that none have ever taxed the injustice of Sir William Thornhill. (*He indicates himself with a gesture and all are amazed, while Sophia bursts into tears.*)

MRS. PRIMROSE (*piteously*).—Ah! sir, how is it possible that I can ever have your forgiveness? The slights you received from me the last time I had the honor of seeing you at our house, and the jokes which I audaciously threw out—these jokes, sir, I fear, can never be forgiven.

BURCHELL (*with a smile*).—My dear good lady, if you had your joke, I had my answer: I'll leave it to all the company if mine were not as good as yours. To say the truth, I know nobody whom I am disposed to be angry with at present but the fellow who so frightened my little girl here. I had not even time to examine the rascal's person so as to describe him in an advertisement. Can

you tell me, Sophia, my dear, whether you should know him again?

SOPHIA.—Indeed, sir, I can't be positive; yet now I recollect, he had a large mark over one of his eyebrows.

JENKINSON (*he has been in the background, but now pushes forward, interrupting her*).—I ask pardon, madam, but be so good as to inform me if the fellow wore his own red hair?

SOPHIA.—I think so.

JENKINSON (*to Burchell*).—And did your honor observe the length of his legs?

BURCHELL.—I can't be sure of their length, but I am convinced of their swiftness; for he outran me, which is what I thought few men in the kingdom could have done.

JENKINSON.—Please your honor, I know the man: it is certainly the same; the best runner in England; Timothy Baxter is his name; I know him perfectly, and the very place of his retreat this moment. If your honor will bid Mr. Jailer let two of his men go with me, I'll engage to produce him to you in an hour at farthest.

BURCHELL.—Will some one call the Jailer? (*Moses goes out and returns with him. To the Jailer.*) Do you know who I am?

JAILER.—Yes, please your honor, I know Sir William Thornhill well, and everybody that knows anything of him will desire to know more of him.

BURCHELL.—Well, then, my request is that you will permit this man and two of your servants to go upon a message by my authority; and as I am in the commission of the peace, I undertake to secure you.

JAILER.—Your promise is sufficient, and you may at a minute's warning, send them over England whenever your honor thinks fit. (*The Jailer and Jenkinson go out and the curtain falls.*)

Scene II.

There are present, as the curtain rises, SIR WILLIAM THORNHILL, DR. PRIMROSE, MRS. PRIMROSE, SOPHIA *and* MOSES. *Enter* SQUIRE THORNHILL, *nephew to* SIR WILLIAM, *and landlord to the* PRIMROSES.

SIR WILLIAM (*to Squire, who is going to embrace his uncle*).—No fawning, sir, at present; the only way to my heart is by the road of honor; but here I only see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, and oppression. How is it, sir, that this poor man, for whom I know you professed a friendship, is used thus hardly? His daughter vilely seduced as a recompense for his hospitality, and he himself thrown into prison perhaps but for resenting the insult? His son, too, whom you feared to face as a man——

SQUIRE (*interrupting suavely*).—Is it possible, sir, that my uncle should object that as a crime which his repeated instructions alone have persuaded me to avoid?

SIR WILLIAM.—Your rebuke is just; you have acted in this instance prudently and well, though not quite as your father would have done: my brother, indeed, was the soul of honor; but thou—Yes, you have acted in this instance perfectly right, and it has my warmest approbation.

SQUIRE.—And I hope that the rest of my conduct will not be found to deserve censure. I appeared, sir, with this gentleman's daughter at some places of public amusement; thus what was levity, scandal called by a harsher name. I waited on her father in person, willing to clear the thing to his satisfaction, and he received me only with insult and abuse. As for the rest, with regard to his being here, my attorney and steward can best inform you, as I commit the management of business entirely to them. If he has contracted debts, and is unwilling, or even unable

to pay them, it is their business to proceed in this manner; and I see no hardship or injustice in pursuing the most legal means of redress.

SIR WILLIAM.—If this be as you have stated it, there is nothing unpardonable in your offence; and though your conduct might have been more generous in not suffering this gentleman to be oppressed by subordinate tyranny, yet it has been at least equitable.

SQUIRE.—He cannot contradict a single particular; I defy him to do so; and several of my servants are ready to attest what I say. Thus, sir, my own innocence is vindicated; but though at your entreaty I am ready to forgive this gentleman every other offence, yet his attempts to lessen me in your esteem excite a resentment that I cannot govern. And this, too, at a time when his son was actually preparing to take away my life,—this, I say, was such guilt, that I am determined to let the law take its course. I have here the challenge that was sent me, and two witnesses to prove it: one of my servants has been wounded dangerously; and even though my uncle himself should dissuade me, which I know he will not, yet I will see public justice done, and he shall suffer for it.

MRS. PRIMROSE.—Thou monster! hast thou not had vengeance enough already, but must my poor boy feel thy cruelty? I hope that good Sir William will protect us; for my son is as innocent as a child; I am sure he is, and never did harm to man.

SIR WILLIAM.—Madam, your wishes for his safety are not greater than mine; but I am sorry to find his guilt too plain; and if my nephew persists—— (*Jenkinson and the servants of the Jailer here enter, dragging a very tall man with red hair.*)

JENKINSON.—Here—here we have him; and if ever there

was a candidate of Tyburn, this is one. (*At sight of these men the Squire shrinks back and attempts to escape, but Jenkinson stops him.*) What, Squire, are you ashamed of your two old acquaintances, Jenkinson and Baxter? But this is the way that all great men forget their friends, though I am resolved we will not forget you.—(*To Sir William.*) Our prisoner has already confessed all. This is the gentleman reported to be so dangerously wounded. He declares that it was Mr. Thornhill (*pointing to the Squire*), who first put him upon this affair; that he gave him the clothes he now wears to appear like a gentleman, and furnished him with the post-chaise. The plan was laid between them that he should carry off the young lady to a place of safety, and that there he should threaten and terrify her. But Mr. Thornhill was to come in, in the mean time, as if by accident to her rescue; and that they should fight awhile, and then he was to run off,—by which Mr. Thornhill would have the better opportunity of gaining her affections himself, under the character of her defender.

Sir William.—I remember that I have seen that coat on my nephew.—Baxter, is this your confession?

Baxter.—Yes, please your honor, and more. Mr. Thornhill has often said to me that he was in love with both sisters at the same time.

Sir William.—Heavens! what a viper have I been fostering in my bosom! And so fond of public justice, too, as he seemed to be! But he shall have it; secure him, Mr. Jailer.—Yet hold! I fear there is not legal evidence to detain him.

Squire (*with great humility*).—I entreat you, sir, not to admit as evidence against me the testimony of two such abandoned wretches; I ask you to examine my servants.

Sir William.—Your servants! Wretch! call them yours

no longer; but come, let us hear what those fellows have to say; let his butler be called. (*The Jailer goes out and brings him in.*) Tell me (*sternly to butler*), have you seen your master and that fellow dressed up in his clothes in company together?

BUTLER.—Yes, please your honor, a thousand times: he was the man that always brought him his ladies.

SQUIRE.—How! this to my face?

BUTLER.—Yes, or to any man's face. To tell you a truth, Master Thornhill, I never either loved you or liked you, and I don't care if I tell you now a piece of my mind.

JENKINSON.—Now then, tell his honor whether you know anything of me.

BUTLER.—I can't say that I know much good of you. The night that gentleman's daughter was deluded to our house, you were one of them.

SIR WILLIAM.—So then I find you have brought a very fine witness to prove your innocence: thou stain of humanity! to associate with such wretches!—(*To the butler.*) But you tell me, Mr. Butler, that this was the person who brought him this old gentleman's daughter.

BUTLER.—No, please your honor, he did not bring her, for the Squire himself undertook that business; but he brought the priest that married them.

SQUIRE.—You lie, like a rascal! I was never legally married to any woman.

SIR WILLIAM.—Good heavens! how every new discovery of his villainy alarms me! At my request, Mr. Jailer, set that young officer, now your prisoner, free, and trust me for the consequences. But where is the unfortunate young lady herself? Let her appear to confront this wretch.

JENKINSON.—Indeed, begging your honor's pardon, if the

company can restrain their curiosity a few minutes, they shall see her. (*He darts off.*)

SQUIRE.—Ay, let him go; whatever else I may have done, I defy him there. I am too old to be frightened with squibs.

SIR WILLIAM.—I am surprised what the fellow can intend by this. Some low piece of humor, I suppose!

PRIMROSE.—Perhaps, sir, he may have a more serious meaning. For when we reflect on the various schemes this gentleman (*referring to the Squire*) has laid to seduce innocence, perhaps some one more artful than the rest has been found able to deceive him. When we consider what numbers he——

Enter JENKINSON *with* OLIVIA.

Amazement! Do I see my lost daughter? Do I hold her? It is, it is my life, my happiness! I thought thee lost, my Olivia, yet still I hold thee—and still thou shalt live to bless me. And art thou returned to me, my darling, to be my comfort in age?

JENKINSON.—That she is and make much of her, for she is your own honorable child, and as honest a woman as any in the whole room, let the other be who she will. And as for you, Squire, as sure as you stand there, this young lady is your lawful wedded wife; and to convince you that I speak nothing but the truth, here is the license by which you were married together. (*He hands it to Sir William.*)

SIR WILLIAM (*after reading it carefully*).—I find this perfect in every respect.

JENKINSON.—And now, gentlemen, a few words will explain the difficulty. That there Squire of renown commissioned me to procure him a false license and a false priest, in order to deceive this young lady. But as I was very much his friend, what did I do, but went and got a

true license and a true priest, and married them both as fast as the cloth could make them. Perhaps you'll think it was generosity that made me do all this; but no, to my shame I confess it, my only design was to keep the license and let the Squire know that I could prove it upon him whenever I thought proper, and so make him come down whenever I wanted money. (*A murmur of delight runs through the group, except that the Squire looks very crest-fallen and falls before his uncle, wringing his hands.*)

Sir William (*raising his foot and hand to kick him out, but suddenly stopping a moment, he speaks*).—Thy vices, crimes and ingratitude deserve no tenderness; yet thou shalt not be entirely forsaken,—a bare competence shall be supplied to support the wants of life, but not its follies. This young lady, thy wife, shall be put in possession of a third part of that fortune which once was thine, and from her tenderness alone thou art to expect any extraordinary supplies for the future.

Squire (*he has been raised to his feet by Sir William during the preceding speech, and now makes a formal bow*). —I return the greatest thanks—such kindness——

Sir William.—Hold! do not aggravate a meanness which is but too apparent. Be gone from our sight, and from all your former domestics choose one as you think proper; for this is all that shall be granted to attend you. (*The Squire goes out and Sir William turns to the group with a smile.*) I think now that all the company, except one or two, seem perfectly happy. There only remains an act of justice for me to do. (*Turning to Dr. Primrose.*) You are sensible, sir, of the obligations we both owe to Mr. Jenkinson; and it is but just we should both reward him for it. Miss Sophia will, I am sure, make him very happy, and he shall have from me five hundred pounds as her fortune; and upon

this I am sure they can live very comfortably together. Come, Miss Sophia, what say you to this match of my making? Will you have him?

SOPHIA (*recoils and almost falls into her mother's arms*).—Have him, sir! no, sir, never!

SIR WILLIAM.—What! not have Mr. Jenkinson, your benefactor, a handsome young fellow, with five hundred pounds, and good expectations?

SOPHIA (*hardly able to speak*).—I beg, sir, that you'll desist, and not make me so very wretched.

SIR WILLIAM.—Was ever such obstinacy known? To refuse a man whom the family have such infinite obligations to, who has preserved your sister, and who has five hundred pounds! What; not have him?

SOPHIA.—No, sir, never! I'd sooner die first.

SIR WILLIAM.—If that be the case, then, if you will not have him—I think I must have you myself. (*He catches her in his arms.*) My loveliest, my most sensible of girls, how could you ever think your own Burchell could deceive you, or that Sir William Thornhill could ever cease to admire one that loved him for himself alone? I have sought some years for a woman, who, a stranger to my fortune, could think that I had merit as a man. After having tried in vain, even amongst the pert and ugly, how great at last must be my rapture to have made a conquest over such sense and such heavenly beauty. (*Turning to Jenkinson.*) As I cannot, sir, part with this young lady myself, for she has taken a fancy to the cut of my face, all the recompense I can make is to give you her fortune; and you may call upon my steward to-morrow for five hundred pounds.

CURTAIN.

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